




X X
Blood Fire Death

BLOOD FINE DEATHS



SLAYER 20, finally I might say. A lot of things happened since the last issue obviously (early 2004 if I remember correct....) and really no point in explaining what and why not, but a lot of changes in the personal aspects of life as well as the death of several computers in the family....(A lot of material created has been lost but not really a big deal as also a lot of material has been created and tossed away by me for whatever reason...) And I could also say it is so hard to continue a magazine here with proper motivation and most of all the financial aspect of it all - you get the picture. I did feel SLAYER 19 was not a perfect ending in flames so I had to do something about it. Something I felt better about, and even if only I care and feel the difference that is all that matters. I really don't think there is room for SLAYER anymore and that is fine, SLAYER does not feel comfortable along all MYSPACE, Internet, whatever web magazines anyway. And to be involved with any kind of music *business* is not so tempting anymore. SLAYER is a product of the '80ies and '90ies and that is how it always will be. I am not really interested in being a "part of a scene or anything where most bands I really don't care about - of course there will always be worthy exceptions, but....it doesn't really matter, SLAYER refuse to progress, SLAYER is a lone wolf that lives its life fine by itself and really don't need any network to be alive - or dead. SLAYER sit on "the fence looking down on everything. SLAYER is a proof of how things used to be and never will be again, so this might be the last SLAYER, or maybe not? Who cares? Who knows? At least I feel like I'm more than done at the moment. This is a tribute to how things were and never will be again. In SLAYER there should be information not available for anyone. This is not for people rotting in front of their computer counting their DIE HARD releases. As far as the selection of the 'bands, just bands that is thought of very highly here, some of the stuff is older things and some is new....And there is a few bands here that I never interviewed in the past which I am extremely pleased to present. So take it as it is, SLAYER was never about proper journalism, just dedication to the cause of music, whatever it might be. So enjoy or not. Probably this is not such a spectacular issue to anyone even with the years of silence but it is to me - but it is just SLAYER, deal with it. Also, the content is slightly different than last issues (aka the Wacken years) and more back to the roots of SLAYER 10 and whatever else that come after, a special thanks to E. of WATAIN for his contributions and designs for SLAYER 20. Also, I'm very proud to have MORBID on the "12 here in SLAYER 20, it makes perfect sense.

This issue would not been possible without myself.

Fornever laid to rest

Fukk Off Life

Metalion





SLAYER!

Metalion - Editor, writer, layout,
artwork, pictures, interviews etc.

TGW - Co Editor

Arne Babb - Mental guidance

E.- Front/back design, interviews

Rok - Art, logo

Rev Kriss Hades - Art

Nagawika - Arne art

Anita Hel Bråten - Art

Annick Giroux - Interview

Ian Christie - Interview

Morte - Art

Eva Sanne - Art

Other articles/interviews/art
should be named by the author,
but I'm sure I missed out on a few,
especially when it comes to art.

Front cover shows E. of WATAIN, picture
taken by Metalion in July 2008

Back cover shows Tyrant of NIFELHEIM

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Thank you:

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Philipp Schulte, NESEBLOD, Mr. Necromancer,
Dr. Schitz, MORBID, Annick Giroux, OBSCURITY,
featured bands and labels and whoever is
involved in my new world!

SLAYER 20 is dedicated to all those who died...
In more recent history
Jon Nødtveidt Quorthon WitchHunter
And as always, Dead and Eurononymous which spirits
will always be the essence of SLAYER MAGAZINE

SLAYER MAGAZINE

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This softcover magazine
version of Slayer Mag #20 does
not come with the Morbid 12"
included with the first 2000
copies.

11"x17" poster of Arne
Collage is included in
all copies.



SLAYER

Remember...





Black Metal Militia

As far as Black Metal these days goes, Sweden is the place that matters. Besides WATAIN, there are a few other worthy components of Black Metal. The thing with WATAIN is that they are everything Black Metal should be all about. Not only is the music top notch but the element of human decay and pure anti christian rage is always very present. WATAIN do take things to the next level and there is no doubt in my mind that they truly are the best current Black Metal band. A Black Metal band with the right ideas and an agenda. This is actually my first interview with E. of WATAIN.

When you started out WATAIN, did you set a long time goal for how to operate the band? Did you have some sort of master plan since day one?

- At first thought, no. But still, somewhere below the raw, spontaneous, decadent surface that was always present during the first phase of the band this feeling lingered that we had taken something upon our shoulders we could not just throw away. 'When hell calls your name there is no way back'. After all the reason for me to start something with H and P was because the minute I met them I understood they were as serious and devoted about Black Metal as I was, and this fueled our creativity and dedication immensely. I was tired of doing semi-professional bands that would just write songs but never take it further than to record a rehearsal or do some very small gigs. With the band I was in before WATAIN, BloodSoil, we had almost 20 - 30 songs of which at least half were great, simple BATHORY/SODOM worship, but all we ever did was drink and rehearse and do some pointless gigs here and there. I wanted to take it further! But I would not say we formed WATAIN with the intent to take over the Black Metal scene or something like that. Keep in mind that when we started out, although Black Metal was at a very low point seen from a wide perspective, to us, in our universe, it never changed. It was something that never died and that deserved the utmost dignity and respect, and with bands like DISSECTION, MALIGN, TRIUMPHATOR, OFERMOD, FUNERAL MIST and NIFELHEIM around and very active in all sorts of ways, it was hard to see the downfall of Black Metal happening, when you were in the midst of it's only true remains. I got into Black Metal just before Euronymous was murdered, and that uncontrolled, lawless and jet-black movement never changed in nature from that moment, not in my heart at least. I tried many times to put that atmosphere into words, to explain the harshness, the cold and the sinister aura surrounding it all, but it's fucking hard. Anyway, by forming WATAIN we entered a scene in which you had to earn your position, if you were a new band with a cocky attitude you had to prove your worth or you'll end up in a hospital. It sounds weird in these days when you can form a Black Metal band with your mother without anyone reacting, but things were radically different in the Black Metal scene around Stockholm and Uppsala when we grew up. We were just as humble and patient with our establishment as the bands of today are not.

When did you realise that WATAIN was a band that would go somewhere? Was it like a major event when you realized this?

- It was two different points I think. The first one was this simple concert-competition that we won over five other really skilled hardcore, rock and whatever bands. The jury consisted of complete musical nerds but they still picked us as the winner, which made me realize that we had a musical potential beyond what I had imagined. The price in the competition was to play a final at a very big stage at a festival in Uppsala in the middle of the day. We came there dead-drunk with huge inverted crosses that we had built, blood and all that. We sounded like shit and I think they had it when I threw off a random 'sieg heil' in a break, just to piss everyone off even further. It worked, and needless to say we didn't win the final. But still we got there, and that was a big step somehow. The second thing that happened was the show we organized just some month after the above mentioned performance, together with the label that put out our first EP, GRIM RUNE PRODUCTIONS. It had us, MALIGN, DARK FUNERAL and some other bands, and it was a very important show in the sense that everyone was there, before that we had mostly done small shows for the locals. We got a great response and from then on things took a very good, twisted turn straight into the underground abyss. We made a lot of contacts and at the same time me and H were doing HELLISH MASSACRE zine and traded tapes and videos with people across the world (this was right before I started to realize that the Internet existed), so through that we also got to know a lot of supportive people, including the guys from END ALL LIFE which introduced us to DRAKKAR, our first label.

At this moment WATAIN have released three albums /four now obviously as this interview has been done over a longer period of time - ED and there is a progression between all of them, did you for instance think of things to do when you were recording your first LP that you were not able to do at that time and could finalize on the 3rd LP?

- In a way, yes, because I always feel that we have a lot more to discover. And the deeper we venture into the tunnels of Black Metal, the stronger that feeling becomes. And strife and hunger is far more important in this kind of art than actual achievement! There is always an urge to take things further, deeper down the abyss. One could say that while we have always been on a path of progress and evolution, the albums themselves are marks of where on that path we were when they were recorded. They all stand as proud, sinister monuments, leading their follower on the downward path towards complete liberation in flaming death. I look with gloating, Luciferian pride upon all that we have done because I know the ruthlessness and devotion with which it has been made. I have always felt completely drained after we have recorded an album or done a concert. That's the thing with Black/Death Metal, it should never be recorded or performed if there is a feeling of limitation or restriction, be it in terms of musical skill or spirit. It should be an outburst of everything you got at the time you record it. There should be no holding back!

After finishing such a momentum release as "Lawless Darkness" - how do you view the process of creating such an album? From the beginning of making the music, the lyrics and the actual recording..... I think it must take some sort of toll on the people involved and I was wondering how many times can someone go through a process like this in a human life? Is there a limit to this creativity? - The process of composing this album has been a mix between deep focus, spontaneity, emotional pandemonium and determination. While the material for the songs came to life during a four year long period without structure or pattern, the completing of the songs took less than 6 months. Everything just fell into place, in the kind of way that makes you feel you are a part of something pre-destined, something controlled by higher forces than just the members of the band. And that is something WATAIN has always been about; the acknowledgement of a great power lurking within the band, a power that is beyond our control. That power is what we have tried to interpret and translate into music on "Lawless Darkness". The album is about the divine and limitless power within WATAIN, something that is unfortunately very rare in music in general. One important thing with this album is that WATAIN was the main inspiration. With the three previous albums we had built a temple of power which we were now able to look back upon and let it influence us. Before, we have probably been more directly inspired by the sounds of other bands etc, but this time I myself at least was mostly inspired by WATAIN as a band. And Lawless Darkness thus become the album which sounds most like WATAIN! The limits of creativity are still unknown to me, luckily. I am starting to suspect I will never know them. I can sometimes feel frustrated by the thought that there is so much things I want to express in music that has never been expressed before, because the depths of darkness and the vastness of the forbidden paradise is without limit! So in order to move further and deeper, especially within something as blueprinted as Black Metal, one has to acknowledge the vastness, nay, the limitlessness, of the sinister force that gave life to this genre. Embrace Chaos! Plunge yourself into the chasms of ageless inferno! Experience! Receive! With Lawless Darkness I definitely feel we have taken an important step in that direction, we have allowed ourselves to dig deeper into the desert-sand an expose more of it's ancient treasures and marvelous riches. It feels as a relief, like new gates have been opened, and it has already inspired us to a lot of new ideas... So music-wise, we have gone away more and more from the simplicity of a general extreme Metal album and more towards the classic, monumental albums of heavy metal. To me it got too limiting to have to work within a certain pattern of creativity all the time. I simply can not have any boundaries now are more elaborate, more detailed, more intricate and much closer to what we want to express than anything we have done in the past. Going towards a wider and more epic sound was a natural process of evolution, following that will to capture MORE within the music. BLACK SABBATH's "Heaven and Hell" is a perfect example of an album that manages to express a broad spectrum of emotions, but still always maintaining the link to the sinister and Satanic. Other albums like that would be "Master of Puppets", "Reinkaos", "In Rock", "Don't Break the Oath", "Jilemnice Ockultista", "Blood Fire Death" etc. I want every album we do with WATAIN to be worthy of being in the company of these masterpieces.



"Lawless Darkness" is the logical follow up to "Sworn To The dark" just as "Sworn To The Dark" was to "Causus Luciferi", the pattern is to always go on still keeping the essence of it all. regarding the tracks of "Lawless Darkness"; no point in analyzing every track but I feel a certain urge if you can go into the "Waters of Ain" track a little bit.....

It is naturally logical because none of the albums were forced or pushed by anything else than a genuine will to express what needed to be expressed. If you start to dissect your music and start to try to apply logical patterns to the process of creativity then you are doomed. If here is not a pure flow of inspiration, then leave it be. "Waters of Ain" is one of the most important songs I have ever been a part of, the crown of our work this far. It also features Carl McCoy from FIELDS OF THE NEPHILIM on a short vocal-part, along with Selim from THE DEVILS BLOOD doing one of the greatest guitar-solos ever recorded. They were both invited to somehow let the song transcend the dimensions of the album even more. It is a requiem in a way, if you see the whole track list of "Lawless Darkness" as a lifelong journey of enlightenment in darkness, then this last song is the circle coming to its end, breaking and collapsing into the nothingness from which it was born.



When it comes to live rituals, how do you view that? A lot of people just go to shows to have a 'good' time and don't really care whoever is playing, isn't that a strange situation? Can the essence of WATAIN brought to such an audience? And do you feel it is worth your time?

- I don't give a fuck nor do I complain about the 'drink beer and have fun' mentality of the average concert visitor, that is how it have always worked and we knew that from the beginning. It is up to us to make them change! Some bands refrain from playing live because they think the audience are a bunch of passive wimps, and although I can relate to that point of view sometimes one could never rule out the fact that if you have something world-altering and divine to deliver from the stage, they will not remain passive! Wimps perhaps, but not passive wimps. They will take a standpoint, because what they are confronted with is too strong not to have a standpoint about. You can ask people what they think of Greenpeace and they might say they don't care, but if you ask about Al-Qaeda, they will certainly have an opinion. And if you have KREATOR and WATAIN on the same bill, by the end of the night it is the latter that the people will remember, be it in a positive or a negative way. So the role of the audience never bothered me, although I will always spit upon all you scared little posers who do not dare to take part in the violence and hysteria of a WATAIN show! And then you have to take into account the fact that every WATAIN show, no matter if it is in front of 10 punks or 3000 Insane Chileans, is holy to us and serves as a communion between us and the forces unto which we direct our praise. This is what drives us, standing in the midst of whirlwinds of chaos and fire, molding our spirits into vessels of darkness...

WATAIN have got a lot of attention by also the more mainstream media, why is that you think? And can you see both good and bad things concerning that?

- It is because the mainstream media and the music world in general has started to realize that Black Metal is one of the strongest and most potent forms of music existing in these days of cultural downfall. It is exotic to them that there is still a subculture or a movement within music that is not (only) based upon plastic, soulless forms of expression done only because of commercial interest. They are fascinated by the fact that such a dark, organic and dangerous thing can still exist within music. WATAIN in turn is one of the bands that represent the epitome of the art form, which is why we get more attention by the mainstream media than 'Black Metal' bands that exist for the same reason as a regular mainstream shit band (see above). To me it's not that strange. If I wanted to investigate the life of dinosaurs I would contact experienced archaeologists, not watch Jurassic Park. What people seem to have a hard time understanding is that even if we appear on MTV we are still WATAIN; soaked in blood, fucking the world, on our knees for the Lord! Our environment and surroundings, especially of such insignificant and spiritless kind as "mainstream media", could never have an impact on our divine nature, which only the Gods to whom we dedicate our work could change. This fear of that bands will change as soon as they step up into the limelight is not something I cannot understand though, because I've seen it happen too, many times. But I look forward to prove that Black Metal CAN indeed survive such a step up without losing anything of relevance, provided that those who perform it are hellbent on maintaining and nourishing the link with the source of it all; the boundless and chaotic essence of our Lord, Satan!

The essence of WATAIN is 3 members but there are sessions players for live rituals, why do you don't get a 100% line-up for everything? And how do you view the core of WATAIN in live situations compared studio sessions?

- We consider Set and Alvaro as members and brothers and we could never have a better line-up on stage than what we have now. However, we have since an early stage decided that WATAIN in it's core will always be us 3 founding members and nothing else. We have been given too many signs of guidance to never change our minds about that. The creative triangle of magic through which all our songs have been channelled must not be disturbed, it is holy in nature and it would be a shame and a sin to ignore that fact.

How do you feel playing the bass in live situations contra not playing the bass?

- I dislike it in a way because every time I've done it it's been because of compromises with the line-up. On the first US tour it was Alvaro - who usually plays the bass with us live - that couldn't get in to the country and on the second it was Set, our 2nd guitarist. So it has always been because of things out of our control. But still, once into it, although I like the freedom of not having an instrument to care about, it can be fucking good as well. When I do only the vocals, that's when WATAIN is in it's right position; I become the ancient sorcerer and wielder of the all-devouring trident. I never feel like a musician when I'm on stage doing vocals. It is a deeply religious experience of transformation into my demoniacal self, my TRUE self. When doing the bass, I feel more like Lemmy, still with the breath of my Father Satan in the back.



A thing that's always brought up when it comes to WATAIN is the stench, the blood etc. I guess many people just see it as a shock thing but I feel it goes deeper than that....Can you explain further about using those kind of things? For instance, we hear about using animals blood and killing animals to get such things, so where do you draw the limit? And how do you view the difference between fake blood and animal blood?

- The blood corresponds with Death, and when molten also to the state of putrefaction, which is something that WATAIN has always been about. It awakens the predatory sense and mixed with the fumes of incense it is pleasing to the god forms which are evoked during WATAIN performances. To smear oneself in sacrificial blood or the blood of your enemy is a common practise in many ancient cults of war and of magic. It has always been and to me there is nothing strange or barbaric with sacrificing an animal. Perhaps it does not relate that well to the moral codes of the western society, but then again I eat the moral codes of western society for breakfast, just so I can shit them out. Anyway, with these explanations in mind, it is needless to say that fake blood is out of the question. We leave that to the jokers and the imitators.

DISSECTION is a name we ought to bring up, you played session bass for them, how would you describe that feeling? To play live with DISSECTION as compared to WATAIN? Do you find it to be a different aura?

- I played live on the three last shows of DISSECTION, and as you can probably imagine it was an extremely emotional and inspiring time to be in such a band! There was a constant feeling of that something historical was taking place, a solemn atmosphere in the air no matter what we did. I still find it hard to compare performing with DISSECTION and with WATAIN. With WATAIN I feel like I am one with the music and lyrics, I picture the stage as one big living infernal organism of which I am a natural part. With DISSECTION, it felt like being in the ranks of a religious military troop, ploughing forth with utter discipline and devotion spawned from it's higher cause. This was a new experience for me but I adapted very quick, mostly because I liked it so much. You can imagine playing songs you have been listening frenetically to for 10 years already. DISSECTION were already one of my most 'nostalgic' and highly revered bands in my music spectrum. Still, I never felt like a 'fan' trying to play someone else's songs. My previous relation to DISSECTION was driven below the task that I had taken upon me, and went through in totalitarian seriousness. The final concert, the Midsummer Massacre on the 24th of June 2006, is still a blur to me. A blur of blazing fire, electric air and the presence of a great darkness.



One other thing which might not be totally fair is that also WATAIN have been compared musically to DISSECTION on a few occasions. How do you feel about that?

- I have always felt that people who judge bands by 'who they sound like' have a far too narrow minded and shallow outlook on music to really get WATAIN. We definitely have no problem with being mentioned in the same context as DISSECTION, but to the incredible individual strength and character of each of these two bands makes comparison of such kind irrelevant. It would perhaps be if the musical similarities had been overwhelming but that is certainly not the case here.

You pay tribute to DISSECTION by playing a cover of them here and there, what is the elements that makes them different played under the WATAIN banner?

- Correct, we have done "The Somberein" on most of the concerts on the Fuck the World tour. I would say that performed by WATAIN it sounds a bit dirtier and rougher, but the aim has never been to make 'our own version' of it. We do it to pay homage and to remind people to always remember.

We touched upon this earlier, but in 'recent' history, the most important releases (in every sense) have been by Swedish bands (WATAIN, DISSECTION, FUNERAL MIST, NIFELHEIM)....Do you think each of these bands - besides you - reached their fully potential yet? Do you think that DISSECTION for instance reached their fully musical potential with "Reinkaos"?

- All of these bands do in one way or another channel things far larger than themselves, and that alone allows for potential of a boundless form, without any limits. How does that work? Simply put; the less the human, the more the inhuman. Inhuman energies is what makes Black Metal interesting, and even more so; divine. Our human mind and the mud it is born into are things that need to be defeated in order to explore our potential further. This leads to the conclusion that the more one works with breaking down the boundaries of the human within, the more one is able to receive the ingredients for writing the most sinister and magical of music (and a lot of other good things as well). This is why I have more potential as a composer of Black Metal now than I had when I was 10, and why I will eventually possess twice the potential of what I do now. Still, if we take "Reinkaos" as an example, I would say it is by far DISSECTION's strongest album and reveals the alchemical completeness of the band, the completing of a mission. As great as a DISSECTION album could get. They for sure used their full potential here (and on their other albums as well for that matter). This brings up a thought worthy of consideration: perhaps there is a limit to Black/Death Metal, a crossroad after which music can no longer portray what has come to life within the artist/magician.

Where is the strength of Black Metal today besides Sweden? What do you think of the uprising of US Black Metal which you might see for yourself on some of your tours for instance? Do you think that the American take on Black Metal is 'different' than the European/Scandinavian one?

- To be honest, I haven't seen anything anywhere else that can compete with our scene in Sweden. Especially not in the USA! I spit scornfully at their feeble attempts of being 'innovative' and taking Black Metal into the living rooms of normal citizens. Fuck you! The US is good to tour in because people are very hungry for and willing to receive WATAIN, but I think it has a lot to do with that the magical, dangerous form Black Metal we represent is something very exotic to them. Few of them actually know about it's fundamentals, or it's capabilities. I think it interests them as something opposed to the plastic culture they are brought up with (which could actually be said for all Black Metal fans in the western world). The origin of the Black Metal scene in Sweden goes way beyond such shallow fascination. For there is something very old and fierce lying in wait beneath the northern soil, whose primordial darkness has colored this artistic current since the beginning.

You also chosen to appear on releases by RAM and NECROPHOBIC for instance. tell us why you chose to involve your talent with other acts.

- I am an artist with a constant urge to create, and although WATAIN is a perfect representation of that urge I still sometimes find it inspiring to work with bands and people that I respect.

Is everything you want in life to be found in relation to WATAIN? Or is there something completely out of the concept of WATAIN that you take pleasure in?

To me, WATAIN is a symbol of my inhuman self, a proud monument of darkness in a world of illusive light. As such, it portrays the sides of my self that have victoriously broken the shackles of existence. This is what polarizes my life. Everything else circles around this black hole of liberation. So yes, everything in my life can be found in relation to WATAIN, although some of it in subtler form than other things. But if there would be anything that went against the WATAINian current, it would have to be eliminated. Mark my words, all things that stand in our way - and many shall they be - must be sacrificed.

<http://www.templeofwatain.com>

WATAIN pictures (c) Metalion

On June 7
Black Metal
was reborn
in Lawless
Darkness



Sworn To The Dark



Lawless Darkness



Ascension Of
The Avernus Demigods

PRICILANALJIN

BLACK
METAL

Pray for your
DEATH

In Conspiracy
with Satan and

Nuclear War

U.S. Tour
August,
MINI AB.

3rd San Francisco

4th Los Angeles

5th Austin

6th Houston

7th Chicago

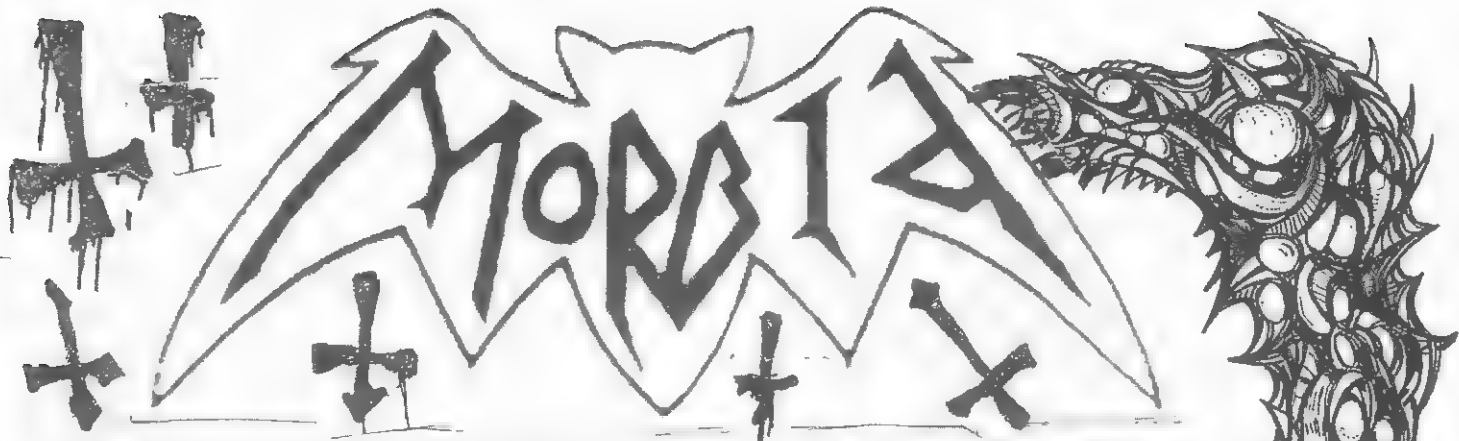


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INÄLVSUTSLITANDE
DÖDSMETALL MED

MORBID





Spring 1987, seems like a different world back then but some things you just don't forget that easily. I was of course very good friends with MAYHEM in those formative years and Euronymous brought me once a tape with MORBID. It was merely a reh. tape but we got obsessed by it, fantastic it was. MORBID delivered some very clever like BATHORY worship and also the lead singer Dead caught our attention. So of course I had to get in touch with this band and Dead send me the very same reh. as well as various bits and pieces of his artwork..... Dead was truly something special, a individual I hardly met anyone alike and I must say I was fortunate to get to know him really well. Dead wasn't that much of a letter writer when I started to know him - it was easier for him to talk so he started to call me. Usually around midnight and we would speak 'til like 5 or so in the morning. That happened on soooooo many occasions during '87 and I really must say I got to know him very well thanks to this. It was funny, I was living still with my parents at that time and as I finished the talks with Dead my father would drive to work in the wee wee hours. Such a paradox when you think of it.....

He was telling me all the plans he had for MORBID and so many other things, and it was with much excitement I finally got the "December Moon" demo, in '87 that still stood out as the best demo year and MORBID fit in there. This was the time when the demos was actually better than most music released, just imaging MORBID ANGEL, INCUBUS (not the INCUBUS on NUCLEAR BLAST, but the only INCUBUS that made a 3 track demo in '87 lead by genius Sterling Von Scarborough) and MORBID was at front in Sweden with the Stockholm Death Metal assault yet to come. MORBID lent a lot to the true imaginary of the earliest forms of Black Metal. Over the years the market has been over populated by bootlegs which only shows what kind of Impact this band had, with so many unofficial releases out we are very proud to release a tribute to Dead in shape of the "12 "Ancient Morbidity" enclosed in this issue. So, I think you should have a proper introduction to these tracks;
Tell us why those tracks was chosen for the "Ancient Morbidity" release? Is it important to know the exact origin of the tracks for instance?

- We wanted to offer something special to SLAYER MAGAZINE of course, so we dug deep into closets to get stuff that has never been released before - and pulled out some raw early stuff. "Tragic Dream" was a weird lullaby-esque track that Dead liked a lot, I think it was one of those things that Gehenna came up with when he was drunk and Dead then bugged him remember the riffs when he was sober. "Tragic Dream" was later on used as an intro to "Disgusting Semla", but originally it was used as a beginning to "From the Dark". The track "From the Dark" went through many many different arrangements, and all four guitarists contributed to it various ways. It proved very difficult to arrange, and one member even claim it should have been divided into three songs! This is an early recording, and as such it differs quite a lot from later versions. This version of "Wings of Funeral" predates the contributions later made by Napoleon Pukes, such as the guitar intro to the track that was added on "December Moon". The live track "Necrodead" is taken from the very first gig (Ultrasjuset April 26 1987), it is an encore version that never has been released and that will never be released anywhere else but through this SLAYER MAGAZINE release. The "12 is finished off with some true words spoken by the one and only Dead. It is taken from a SCAPEGOAT recording done by Dead and Gehenna - presumably in the bed room or something, (SCAPEGOAT later turned into MORBID) and is most likely recorded in '85. The front cover is a slightly altered version of Dead's suggestion for cover for the reunion '77 that was planned to be recorded upon his return in '91. The back of the cover is Dead's poster for the cancelled reunion gig, that Dead and I tried to pull together in '89. Both back and front have been skillfully retouched by Erik Danielsson. The insert has the original art work by Dead.

A side: Tragic Dream/From the Dark

B side: Wings of Funeral/Necrodead



Do you
speak
Ro?
I don't

MORBID ROMÄNTIC? - NY VORBES ROMÄNTIC

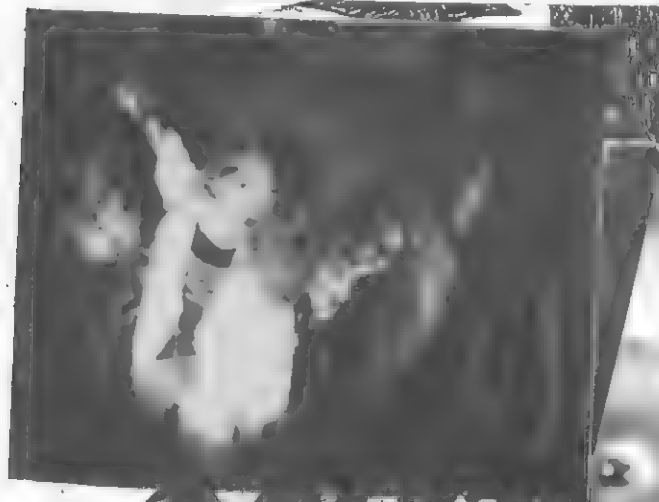
Did you feel like there was something special with the music of MORBID, that this might had the potential to grow into something bigger?

- Very hard to say, and I am anything but objective about it. Speaking only for myself, it was very special - but there are so many memories and feelings associated with it so I can't judge the music on its own terms. It is hard to say how things could have developed with the reunion, considering that Death and Black Metal in the early '90ies by and large had moved beyond the '80ies Thrash sound that MORBID had. And we were going to keep the sound and style in the planned reunion '7, so one can only guess how it would have been received. Without the '90ies sound of Death and Black we might very well have been regarded as outdated, unfashionable, and passé for all I know. Which would have suited us just perfectly! But I am pretty sure that humour was part of the early MORBID, as Dead grew weary of it pretty early on. In fact, he thought there were way too many people singing "la-la-la-la" in '89! He was thinking of going in new directions, including using Eastern European folk music... I have many times wondered what it all would have turned out like if he hadn't committed suicide. (Again, to quench any hasty conclusions; Dead never mentioned to me any intentions to leave MAYHEM when he planned to move back to Sweden, and he certainly was no stranger to the idea of running (at least) two bands at the same time (remember we tried to get a MORBID reunion going in '89, when he was definitely not thinking about quitting MAYHEM).)

It is also interesting to hear what a bunch of young Stockholmers in the '80ies thought of the future (music wise that is) did you have any realistic goals?

- When we began, getting a record company was not conceivable - record companies hadn't begun signing underground bands to the extent that happened just a couple of years later. So we had no plans of getting a record deal, and didn't send any tapes to record companies (well... with one exceptional exception!). But we rehearsed very hard, and MORBID is definitely the most disciplined band I have played in. Really, I don't remember us thinking about the future. It was very much of 'here and now', and doing our very best at the gigs no matter how few and drunk the punks in audience were. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you Metalion for this interview, and for this release. You were the first to interview me and Dead, and you have remained a faithful friend through the thick of it all. I also would like to say that Dead had his share of friends in Sweden, and this interview is no pretending that I was his only, or best friend, around here. This is my second MORBID interview since the '80ies, and since it will be my very last MORBID interview (enough has been said) it is only fitting that it is done by you. Thank you!

Now
Cast
open



At dusk
the most secret and evil
forgotten by the mortal centuries
ago... drifting by in a dream.

WHIPLASH

WHIPLASH have never been featured in SLAYER MAGAZINE before and that is really sad, I always liked them but could oddly enough not do interview back in the day. Now, after some serious detective work and assistance from Yana of WENCH and Borivoj Krigin I tracked down Tony Scaglione and could finally do my WHIPLASH interview. And I think that fits well here in this jubilee issue! POWER AND PAIN!!!! THRASH 'TIL DEATH!!!!

Hello Tony, how are you today?

- Hello Jon! I am doing very well thanks. While I was typing the answers to these questions I was inspired to pull out a few of the old recordings that I have played on to get in the mood. I hadn't listened to many of them in a while. It was a very emotional experience and I just want to say thanks for that!

First of all, can you tell us how you ended up being a drummer? Most people seem to choose guitar as their weapon so how come you decided on the drums?

- My first instrument was actually the trombone in the stage band in elementary school. Along the way I learned some guitar and then to drums. I started playing drums in elementary school at around 10 years of age. I developed a foundation in the rudiments and then I started playing drum set at about age 12. I took some private lessons with a local teacher and learned by listening and playing along to records.

How did you figure out you have a talent as a drummer?

- Understanding the mechanics of drumming and techniques always came naturally for me. My teachers always commented on how fast I learned new things. I feel that everyone has an affinity towards something in life be it music, dancing, painting, sports, computer programming, etc. and I just naturally gravitated toward the drums. I love rhythm! Life is so full of rhythm each day.

Most people will recognize you as the WHIPLASH drummer, but you have done so much more than that. Personally, what have been the most important albums you'd been involved in?

- Well Jon, 'important' is a relative term. What may be important to me, someone else might not appreciate. But, one of my favorite recordings I have done was obviously "Power And Pain" with WHIPLASH. That was our first full-length record! We had a couple of tracks on a compilation called Speed Metal Hell Vol. 1 before that which was pretty cool too, but the full album was something we had all imagined. It put everything in motion for us. I really love "Thrashback" as well. It was great to be back in the studio recording with the original lineup again! Tony, Tony and I started WHIPLASH and ended WHIPLASH. The record I played on by RAGING SLAB garnered much critical acclaim and was the first album I played on that was released by a major label (RCA RECORDS) so that was very special as well. All of the recordings I have played on are very special to me.

Lets move back to the early days of WHIPLASH - or your career --- I believe you were involved in some projects before WHIPLASH too. Like JACKHAMMER for instance. But anyway, would you say with WHIPLASH you were knowing you had something interesting to offer as far as musical ideas goes? Like, if you saw some major progression between JACKHAMMER and WHIPLASH?

- I definitely feel there was a big progression from JACKHAMMER to WHIPLASH. JACKHAMMER was the first band I was ever in. It was a trio with me and the guitarist singing (if you want to call it that!). The music was pretty heavy. The guitarist (Chris Ott) father was a very respected arranger in the music industry, having worked with Frank Sinatra and the VILLAGE PEOPLE along with many others. He actually arranged the horn sections for the VILLAGE PEOPLE hits "YMCA" and "In The Navy". Chris and I formed JACKHAMMER officially and then we got a bassist named Rob Harding. We ended up doing a demo called "Lethal Injection", which we promoted heavily. Chris then met Tony Portaro somehow and we jammed together and asked him to join. Tony was in a band called Toxin at the time. Both of our bands were receiving airplay on a fantastic underground college radio station called WMSC. They supported WHIPLASH, TOXIK, OVERKILL and many others. We did another demo but then Tony P. and I ended up parting ways with the other guys and forming WHIPLASH. We wrote a bunch of songs together, just the two of us jamming at my house. I think after we wrote those initial songs (the "Thunderstruck" demo) and ideas for others, was when Tony and I realized that we had very special songwriting chemistry together. Later when we got Tony Bono we knew that it was some sort of destiny, you know? Tony, Tony and Tony!

Is it hard to be in a band at that stage (demo stage) knowing if your material is good enough or not?

- I feel that it is often very difficult for any artist to not be biased toward his or her material, but as time goes on, it becomes a little easier to be able to edit yourself. At the beginning, you're just learning how to put it all together. It is a very magical time. Bands just play from their heart! This I feel is why so many bands' first albums are often their greatest.

I'm not going to go into some in depth interview nardy questions here but I'm just picking up a few leads here and there. I remember you sent me the "Thunderstruck" demo and I guess that opened a lot of doors for the band. Also the "Messenger In Blood" demo of course.

- The "Thunderstruck" demo was the beginning of WHIPLASH. This was recorded in 1984 I believe. It's certainly been a long time! We received great reviews for the demo from many of the underground Metal magazines and fanzines that were around back then. I remember personally sitting by the cassette recorder and making a couple of thousand copies that we sent out to magazines and anyone who sent money for postage! As I mentioned, we had one song ("Thrash 'Til Death") that appeared on the compilation "Speed Metal Hell". The cassette version of this album also has one other demo song called "Chained Up, Strapped Down". 13 years later this song became "Nails In Me Deep" on the "Thrashback" album, same music, and different lyrics. I always loved that one. It has that killer EXCITER feel. We did have a couple of other demos after that really solidified the interest of a few well-known record companies.

Like, you were offered a deal with ROADRUNNER/RACER and you were one of the first bands from the USA to sign with them, what were your expectations when you signed a record deal? Do you think you had a lot of unrealistic dreams?

- Of course. I think any newly signed band has totally unrealistic dreams! These labels promise bands everything and when you are young you believe it all! ROADRUNNER promised SO much and didn't deliver on any of it. It was a totally sobering experience for all of us. We never received a penny in royalties from those assholes and Power and Pain sold extremely well. I have spoken with so many bands that on ROADRUNNER who have had the same experience. The biggest disappointment for us was when we were promised a major ROADRUNNER package tour. It was supposed to be WHIPLASH, CARNIVORE and KING DIAMOND. KING DIAMOND was starting to get very popular in the US right after MERCYFUL FATE. This was immediately after the release of the "Power And Pain" album and the debut CARNIVORE record. We were great friends with CARNIVORE and we were all really excited. A couple of weeks before the tour the record company told us that MEGADETH was going to be the opening band on the whole tour. They totally fucked us at the last minute. We were crushed. I read in an interview in SNAKEBIT that personally you would have rather signed with COMBAT, but do you really think it would have been a major change in your career if you signed with a different label?

- I don't necessarily know if COMBAT would have been better, but the bands on COMBAT seemed to be doing well especially in the States. We had contracts from six or seven labels I believe. COMBAT was one of them. I remember the morning after WHIPLASH signed with ROADRUNNER, one of the main guys at COMBAT called me very early in the morning. Telling me what idiots we were for signing with ROADRUNNER and how bad we would get fucked over. He was certainly right. In retrospect, I think COMBAT would have been a better move for us to get established in the US. I really feel that if we had some promotion behind us we could have been a lot more popular. We were doing extremely well in the TN State area and I think we could have really done well all over the US. The Thrash scene was getting popular at the time. But you live and learn!

Anyway, the fruitful result of this deal was the amazing "Power And Pain" album which today still stands out, what are your own thoughts concerning this release? Do you still listen to it?

- Well first of all, let me say thanks for the kind words. "Power And Pain" was very special for Tony, Tony and I. It was the first album of our career. What a great feeling! We recorded that in about 6 days for \$5,000 dollars. It was a fantastic learning experience for all of us. It was a few months before, that we became very good friends with some great people in New York. We became friends with the guys from AGNOSTIC FRONT, CARNIVORE and the CRUMBSUCKERS, it was a great time. All four bands - WHIPLASH, CARNIVORE, AGNOSTIC FRONT and the CRUMBSUCKERS, were all managed by the same lady, a crazy lady named Connie Barrett. We were all doing records at the same studio in Brooklyn with the same producer, Norman Dunn. So Vinnie and Rob from AGNOSTIC FRONT and Pete and Laurie from CARNIVORE did some back up screams on the record. If you listen closely on "Stagedive" you can hear Pete Steele on the chorus with Tony P. singing "Thrash to kill, blood will spill". I'm not sure if people realize that. You really have to listen for it. I feel honored by the fact that the record has brought joy to many people and that it is still talked about even almost 20 years later. I am actually listening to it as I am writing this.

I'm getting a bit side tracked here, but, you probably know that DESTRUCTION is still going and on their recent albums they used song titles like "Nailed To The Cross" and "Thrash 'Till Death", do you think WHIPLASH would have had any kind of influence on them?

- DESTRUCTION was always a favorite of mine. I had their EP and "Infernal Overkill" - Great records. I haven't heard them in a while. I don't know why they have the similar song titles. I'm honestly not sure if WHIPLASH has had any influence on them or not. They influenced me though.

Anyway, even if the production was pretty rough on your debut album I think the album still stood out because of the strength of the material. Do you think this album is a classic?

- Like I mentioned, the producer Norman Dunn was producing each of the albums for WHIPLASH, the first CARNIVORE record, the CRUMBSUCKERS ("Life Of Dreams") and AGNOSTIC FRONT ("Cause For Alarm"). If you play all of them, you will notice that they have a similar quality. I think the WHIPLASH record has the worst production of all of these, but I guess it has a certain raw charm. We were extremely disappointed when we heard the test pressing. Overall, I think the album was well received and as I said, people still talk about it nowadays so we must have done something right!

Before I forget, I need to speak of DEATHRASH too. You played with them on the infamous "Faces Of Death" demo. I know that the former member of that band used to be in WHIPLASH in the old days. But anyway, this demo was great, but slightly different than WHIPLASH. What were your thoughts on that demo?

- Yes, that was a cool demo. Pat Burns, a great bassist, played with Tony Portaro and I in WHIPLASH for a while before we got Tony Doro. Pat lived far away from us and ended up putting together his own band DEATHRASH and asked me to play with them on the demo. I really like that demo. One song ended up on "Speed Metal Hell Vol. 2". You only played on that demo, right? But I was wondering if you could fill me in on what happened to those guys. I remember I read in BLACKTHORN back in the day they had a new line-up and they were recording an album, but nothing happened. Do you know what happened?

- Yes I only played on the demo. DEATHRASH played a few shows here and there but the singer ended up becoming a born again Christian. Pat and I later formed ZERO HOUR together.

You played in a lot of different bands with various line-ups, could you tell us the strength of playing in a trio powerhouse as opposed to any other kind of line-up?

- Well, I really enjoy playing in a trio setting. I think that it extremely difficult to pull off, especially with Thrash. The only other trio I know that played Thrash was WARGASM. Playing in a trio format makes you really concentrate because any mistakes that are made are immediately evident. As opposed to having other guitars or keyboards to cover it up. Many of my favorite bands were trios, CREAM, THE JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE, RUSH, MOTORHEAD, and GOVT MULE etc. It is also very cool to play in a 2-guitar lineup because I love to hear double lead guitar harmonies!

OK, now I need to speak about SLAYER of course. I think a lot of people will remember you played a tour with them, and even if you told the story a million times it would be nice if you could refresh our memory by telling the story of how that happened.

- SLAYER was on tour for the "Reign In Blood" album and Dave decided to quit or whatever happened. I got a phone call from someone at SLAYER's record company explaining the situation and those they wanted me to fly out and jam with them. I had to learn all of their material up to that point in about 2 weeks. I flew out to California met with the guys and we played once or twice and they asked me if I would like to go on the road with them on a tour opening for WASP. The bill was RAVEN opening, then SLAYER in the middle and WASP headlining. We played about a 45-minute set each night with a total of about 30 or 40 shows. I had a great time and it was a fantastic learning experience for me.

So when you left WHIPLASH for this gig did you think you were going to be a permanent member of SLAYER on some level?

- It was a weird situation. I think that they were totally shocked that Dave left and they harbored a lot of resentment toward him for leaving. I think that they all realized that Dave was a signature part of their sound and what a great chemistry they had playing together. I think that they hoped that Dave would realize this too and eventually would come back. That's definitely my interpretation of the whole thing. So I stepped into a really strange situation on all levels. But, they asked me to go on the road and I said I would love to!

It must have been hard joining an experienced act, as SLAYER as the new guy, especially as the other members were so tight already, how was the experience?

- Obviously the SLAYER guys had been playing together for a long time so they were used to each other's styles both musically AND personally. Just as I was used to playing and hanging out with Tony P. and Tony S. in WHIPLASH. I was only 18 at the time and WHIPLASH had only really played a handful of live shows but we did rehearse almost every day. So with SLAYER, at first it was difficult for all of us to get used to each other's playing styles, but as the tour went on we started to really come together. All things considered I think it was a great tour. It was extremely interesting for me to see how a bigger tour worked on a day-to-day basis.

Be honest with us, did you ever think you would be a permanent member of SLAYER?

- I honestly didn't know. I just looked at it as a day-to-day thing, trying to play the best I could and to improve and learn with each and every show. I don't think the band really knew what they were going to do. At least if they did, I certainly wasn't aware of it.



What were your feelings when the SLAYER adventure was over?

- It was kind of a relief. I mean, you have to realize that every note I played was immediately a comparison to Dave and there was no room for anything else. That gets to be kind of a drag after a while, kind of disheartening. There wasn't any room for me to be myself. Dave is the only guy who can make the band sound like they should sound.

Did you ever feel like you betrayed the WHIPLASH guys?

- Absolutely not. I went to them and explained the situation when it was offered and Tony and Tony were extremely supportive. No bad feelings whatsoever.

Was it awkward to see WHIPLASH continue and releasing new albums ("Ticket To Mayhem" and "Insult To Injury") without you?

- Tony, Tony and I wrote almost all of the songs on Ticket to Mayhem together around the time of Power and Pain and shortly after. That album was pretty much all written. After the SLAYER tour I just chose not to get back into the WHIPLASH situation due to many factors including problems with management, the record company and other sobriety issues that certain members of the band were having. "Ticket" came out great but I really don't like "Insult". The vocalist ruined it for me.

So what were your thoughts when WHIPLASH ended the first time?

- The record company had forced WHIPLASH to get the new singer and this was the end of it. I wasn't playing with them at the time but it was a long time coming. There were too many obstacles involved.

You kept yourself busy anyway, doing a lot of projects. I was wondering if you could tell me a bit more about one of those, ZERO HOUR. This is a band I heard great things about but never heard myself so it would be nice if you could tell me the story of that band. You only did demos, right?

- ZERO HOUR was a fun project to be involved in. I originally formed the band with bassist Pat Burns (DEATHRASH-). The guitarist was a guy named Robbie Goodwin who had played with Florida Death Metalers MASSACRE. Pat knew him. I got a friend of mine, guitarist Gordon Ansis (LEEWAY, AGNOSTIC FRONT) for the other guitar spot and we had a guy named Joe Haggerty on vocals. This was a great lineup. We wrote a bunch of songs and recorded a demo on our own at my house. We sent out the tape to a few people and we ended up getting an offer from ROADRUNNER to do a development deal if we got rid of the singer Joe. Pat and I met with Cees Wessels to see what he had to offer and he told us that he really liked the music but not the vocals. He told us it reminded him of BLUE CHEER, which was totally out of left field. To me it kind of had a TESTAMENT/IRON MAIDEN kind of sound. We ended up parting ways with Joe and tried to get another singer but nothing materialized and the band fell apart. I accepted an offer for a tour with a band called LUDICRIST right after that.

So how did you feel about reforming WHIPLASH in '93 or so, why not just continuing with your other projects?

- That came about after Tony P. and I finished up a European tour with M.O.D. Now that was a great band! Tony, a guy named Rob Maschetti on bass (later of PRO PAIN) and me and of course Billy on vocals. We were tight. Throughout that tour Billy would always tease Tony and I and say things like "Why don't you two guys just get WHIPLASH back together already?" So we discussed it and decided to sit down and write some new material. Tony and I got together in his basement and drank beer and wrote a shit load of tunes that later became the "Cult Of One" album. We didn't originally plan on calling it WHIPLASH. Once we were in writing mode we realized that the material we were coming up with wasn't Thrashy and didn't really seem like WHIPLASH to us, but we couldn't find another cool name. We finally figured that we were the ones who started the band so we could call it whatever we wanted.

A lot of the bands you been involved in seems to be more on the HARDCORE side too, so was that musical genre equally important as Metal?

- Man, I think when it really comes down to it great music is great music. People who limit their listening are just being close minded and losing out. There were many great Metal bands back then, but there were also many great Hardcore bands as well. What is called 'Hardcore' today has very little in common with what was Hardcore when I was starting out. There were great bands like the BAD BRAINS, MINOR THREAT, AGNOSTIC FRONT, CRO MAGG just to name a few. I was a friend with many people in the Hardcore scene and I ended up playing with some of the main bands including CAUSE FOR ALARM and SHEER TERROR. I would be at CBGB's every Sunday for the matinee shows. It was awesome! There was an intense energy in Hardcore that many Metal bands just couldn't touch. Anyway, the reunion album you did then, seriously, I never cared much for "Cult Of One", and how do you view that album?

- Well, I wouldn't consider "Cult Of One" a reunion album really but I do like the way "Cult Of One" the album turned out. We did get some negative reactions because people expected some kind of return to Thrash which it obviously wasn't. We certainly didn't want to disappoint the older Thrash fans but we just wrote what came to us, without any preconceived notions. I also think the band we had on that record was excellent.

And all of sudden you were out of the band again and the band released another strange album; "Sit, Stand, Kneel, Pray". I tell you, its been very hard being an WHIPLASH fan over the year as that album did nothing for me either. I guess during this time you were more focused on doing CAUSE FOR ALARM? Right?

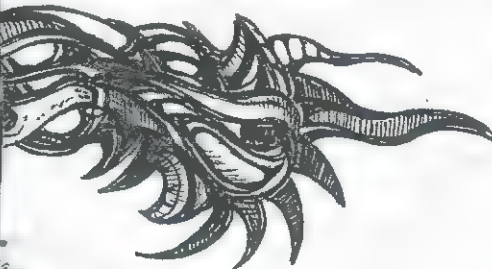
- This is how it happened. Many people didn't seem to realize that WHIPLASH was never a big touring band. It just never seemed to all come together. We didn't really plan on touring off that much for "Cult Of One", only if it would be financially worth it. Around the time we were recording the record, I had accepted an offer to tour with the Hardcore band SHEER TERROR. They had just signed to MCA RECORDS and had a bunch of touring ahead and I was very into it. I had also finished recording "Cheaters and the Cheated" with CAUSE FOR ALARM as well if I remember correctly. I spoke with Tony P. and I told him that I was going to be pretty busy with SHEER TERROR so he might want to get a replacement. They went on to record "Sit, Stand, Kneel, Pray" with a local friend on drums. There were also many problems with the singer on "Cult Of One", which eventually led to his dismissal. He was a fantastic singer but hard to deal with personally.

So when we reached the year 1999 and we saw yet another WHIPLASH album in the shape of "Thrashback" I was very skeptic in the beginning but, the three Tony's back in the band making one helluva Thrash album. What do you think clicked on this album? It sounds so right in a way. Of course a lot of the material were old songs, but still, this is one great LP...

- I'm really glad that you liked "Thrashback" Jan. We all were very pleased with how that came out. And they way we recorded it was crazy. Tony P. and I wrote almost all of the newer songs down in his basement on a four track. Then Tony Bono and I were on Tour in Europe with CAUSE FOR ALARM and one night Tony came up with some killer riffs and we recorded them and they became "Stab" and the instrumental "Strike Me Blind". We came back from that tour and recorded "Thrashback" soon after. We only actually rehearsed twice before recording it. And I don't think that we made it through one entire song at the rehearsals. So when recording, I did the drums all by myself with the producer. I played along to some of the demo tracks and played some just by memory. Then Tony and Tony did all of their parts. We also ended up using some of the same gear that we used on "Power And Pain". I used the same snare drum, Bono used the same bass and Tony used some other stuff. It just had a great vibe from the beginning. Tony, Tony and I started WHIPLASH and Tony Tony and I ended it.

Sadly enough that was the last to be WHIPLASH album for obvious reasons, but did you ever start writing material for a follow up to that album?

- The only time after that that I played together with Tony and Tony was at the first March Metal Meltdown in New Jersey and another local club gig. I know Tony and Tony played a bunch of shows with Joe Cangelosi on drums. Joe was always a great guy.



About the "Thrashback" album, one thing that always puzzled me was the guest appearance by Michael Romeo, how did you convince him to play on a Thrash album?

- SYMPHONY X had recorded a few albums at the same studio WHIPLASH recorded "Cult Of One" and "Thrashback" at and we used the same producer Steve Everett. We needed some keyboards when we were doing "Cult Of One" and Steve suggested that we call Mike Pinella and Mike Romeo and him both showed up. Mike P. played on a couple of tracks. Later when we recorded "Thrashback", there was the one tune, "Strike Me Blind", which Tony P. had no lyrics for and he wanted to make it into an instrumental. I suggested to Steve that we call Mike and Mike and have them come down and do something. It came out great and they were consummate professionals and very nice guys.

Of course we all know what happened to Tony Bone (R.I.P.) but I'm sure that is a subject that has been discussed more than enough other places. But maybe to do something different you could share a happy story about him with us?

- Everything about Tony was great. One of my favorite memories was at a CAUSE FOR ALARM show in Leipzig where Tony B. and Dan the guitarist pulled their pants down and played the last half of the set like that. It was hilarious. There was hardly anyone at the show and we were all having a crazy time. Tony was a great friend and I miss him deeply. I think about him all of the time.

Of course you are now involved in some other projects, so feel free to use this space to update us on your current projects and bands?

- Currently, I am taking a little time off. I just got re married and am settling down with my wife. I have also been seriously studying the congas and other Latin American percussion. I am fascinated by it! I will let you know what happens!

What was your happiest/best memory as a musician?

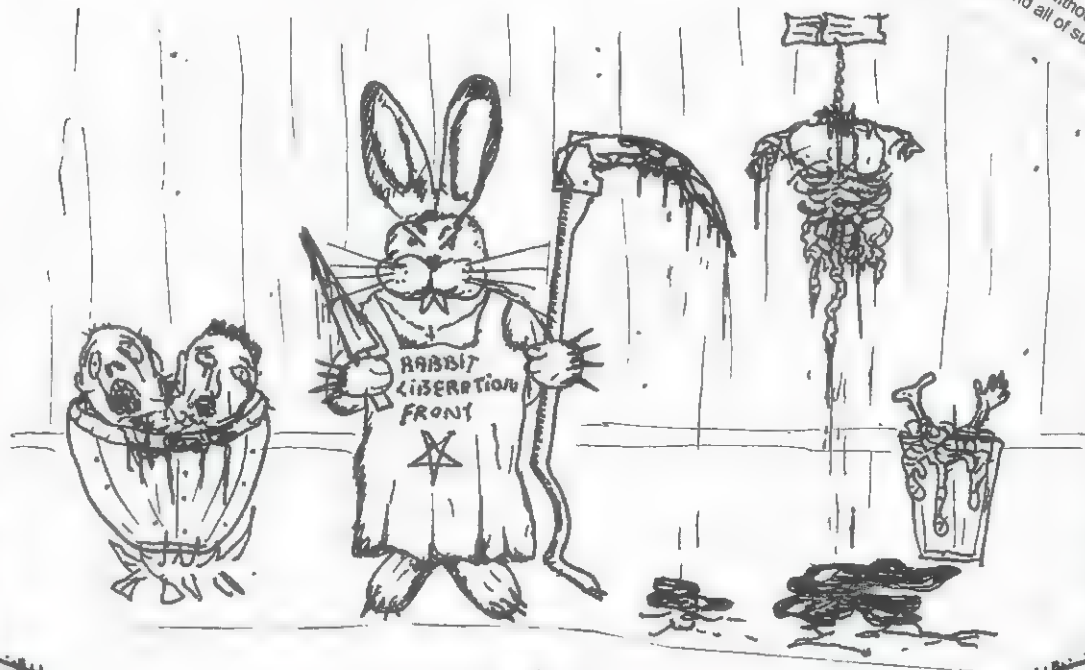
- I have many great memories throughout my career but I would have to say the day that the first WHIPLASH album was released was the most meaningful. That was very special for all of us.

OK Tony, it has been a pleasure. This interview is going to appear in SLAYER 20, which also will celebrate our 20 years anniversary in the underground. Anything you want to say to our old crusty readers regarding that?

- I just want say thank you to all of the fans of all of the bands that I have had the opportunity to play with. Throughout the years, they have always made me feel that I have really accomplished something special. It really means a lot to me that I have been given the chance to make music that touched people's lives in some way. I am honored that people are still discussing and headbanging to the music all these years later. Thanks from the bottom of my heart.



I do know WHIPLASH reformed after I did this interview (without Tony Scaglione) but I never heard that last album they did and all of sudden they were gone again.....



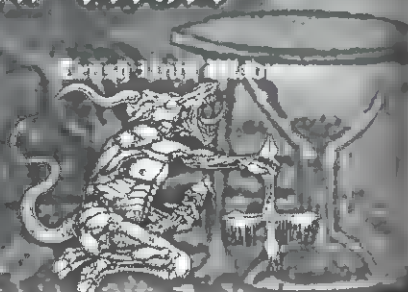


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PLANETMETAL





BATHORY



BATHORY, what can a man say! I remember first time hearing BATHORY in the first "Scandinavian Metal Attack" sampler back in the '80ies and I was blown away by the sheer intensity of "Sacrifice" and "Return Of Darkness And Evil". This was so raw and massive and certainly taking everything to the next level as far as extremity goes. I remember we did a BATHORY story in SLAYER 2 without knowing anything about the band, just making a story based on the facts we could find on the first album cover. After that Quorthon and Wornth contacted us offering us an interview, which was published in SLAYER 3/4 in '86. That issue also had Quorthon on the cover. He also sent a hand signed vinyl version of "The Return..." LP, great memories... And when "Under The Sign Of The Black Mark" was released in '87 it was ecstatic to see our names mentioned in the thanks list. For sure that was a massive inspiration, it still is, being mentioned on one of the greatest extreme Metal albums ever for sure is a kick!!!! Also, when that album was released in the US they made a sticker on the front with a quote from SLAYER 5 where we reviewed that album. Over time I lost the sticker so if anyone out there has a copy for sale (with the sticker obviously) I'd be more than willing to pay massive amount of cash for that! With "Blood Fire Death" in '88 I think BATHORY reached perfection. It's hard to say but I think after all this must be the ultimate BATHORY LP. While the two first ones where the essence of Necro Black Metal things changed slightly on the "Under The Sign Of The Black Mark" album where things got a bit more melodic and eerie, especially on tracks like "Woman Of Dark Desires", again a new level of extremity was found. Anyway, I was talking about "Blood Fire Death" which was even more varied and it is a total masterpiece. It has the typical trademark raw BATHORY sound as well as the more epic parts which would develop even further on the coming albums. But with the four first albums Quorthon made Metal history and forever will be the best as far as extreme Metal goes. Anyone into extreme Metal should live by those albums, as far as I'm concerned they have never been topped and with the state of the current scene it is not very likely to change. What comes after is also very interesting, the "Hammerheart" album was released in '89 and featured more of this so called Viking style and more of Quorthon's normal singing. For me this was a new chapter in the BATHORY saga and I prefer not to mention them along the first four albums, as this is so different, still very unique and very good. As far as I'm concerned this was what spawned the whole Viking Metal era. "Hammerheart" was followed by "Twilight Of The Gods" and I see those albums as 'twins' as they are fairly comparable and not that different in style. Kind of like the two first albums.

For some reason Quorthon decided he didn't like SLAYER MAGAZINE anymore (copy of fax printed here) and to this day I never understood what that was all about, maybe it was the solo albums he released which I didn't think to highly about, maybe it was something else! I will never know. Also, in SLAYER 10 we re-printed a BATHORY interview from a Swedish Metal magazine called. That interview was contributed to us from none other than Jon Nødtveidt and some times I wonder if it was that which he was upset about? I mean, that interview was not for SLAYER MAGAZINE in the first place; it was just translated to English and published by us in '95. (With the permission of Jon Nødtveidt of course...) But seriously, if Quorthon hated me more than life itself I wouldn't care, what he has given as far as music goes will forever be treasured by me, I will always think highly of the BATHORY albums and it was a shame that his life ceased to be in June '04, his memory will forever live on and his music is eternal!

So on the following pages you can read some sort of tribute we put together in order to honor the man who changed our lives. There are a few interviews and reviews of every album. I know it isn't much but just a little thing from us here.

BATHORY



HORDES



This interview was originally conducted March 21st, 1994. I was at the time living in Germany, and Quorthon was doing some interviews, promoting his first solo album, simply entitled "Album". I remember I was really psyched when I was waiting for Quorthon to call me, and it felt like an honor to do this interview. Quorthon told me later in the interview that it's bullshit to worship other humans, and to think high thoughts of artists just because of them having released movies, books, albums or whatever. He might have a point, but I nevertheless think it's important to have role models and sources of inspiration. Quorthon and his BATHORY was truly a massive source as such, and his legacy as a pioneer in music cannot be ignored. As a tribute to the memory of Quorthon, I hope you enjoy reading this interview, originally published in Norwegian, in the fanzine METAL SHUFFLE, spring 1994. I haven't changed anything in the actual content; this is the way it was spoken a decade ago.

- Why I decided to do a solo album? Well, originally, I never planned to do an album as this, but in the end someone managed to talk me into doing it anyway. After six BATHORY albums, covering Black, Death and Epic-Metal, I ran out of ideas concerning BATHORY, so I just had to do something completely new. A solo album seemed to be the only way out, then.

Has the name BATHORY become an obstacle to you? I mean - you are BATHORY, so what's the difference if you release this as Quorthon or BATHORY?

- Fine, but I felt I wanted some kind of challenge. I've been doing BATHORY for 11 years now, and I felt the time had come for something new. I hear talk about VENOM reuniting - what's the point? When "Welcome To Hell" was released, it was the most evil album in the universe. If they have released that album today, people would have laughed themselves to death! VENOM will never be the same today as it was back then, and the same thing goes for BATHORY! So is BATHORY definitely gone then, or can we expect more albums in the future?

- I have never said BATHORY was going to break up! But we really want to surprise people with the next album, and we need to come up with some really great ideas first! After "Twilight Of The Gods" I felt like I had painted myself into a corner, and I won't release another BATHORY album before we can do something new and special. It's just a matter of time, a break, and this break is being used as a possibility to do this solo album. So, are you happy with "Album"?

- Well, there are too many effects on the vocals, and the production differs a lot from the BATHORY-albums. Still, I think the album is quite heavy, and the three songs on the promo CD ("No More And Never Again", "Boy In The Bubble" and "Feather"), are quite representative of the album. I have been living with the recordings of these songs for the past 6-8 months, and I felt very happy when I could put all the recording stress behind me. I think I'm happy, you know, I try to focus in the studio, to avoid mistakes, so yeah, I am satisfied with the album!

How would you describe the biggest differences between "Album" and where you left off with "Twilight Of The Gods" three years ago?

- "Twilight Of The Gods" was a huge change from "Blood Fire Death" and "Hammerheart", and during the last eight years of my life, I've only been listening to classical music. I haven't heard one Metal album during these years! So I wasn't sure I was able to produce a heavy guitar sound again - I guess I have suffered some damage after all the classical music. But I just discovered some old albums with HUMBLE PIE, MOUNTAIN and AFGHAN WOLF, and these albums were a solid therapy to me. So simply said is "Album" a cross of different bands, and the album has shown myself that I can still produce the guitars the way I want them to sound. As a musician you have always emphasized mood and feel. "Album" has songs like "Feather" and "Boy In The Bubble" who are quite moody - but not in an evil and uncomfortable BATHORY-ish way. The moods are more based on sorrow?

- Yeah, I agree. "Feather" is by the way based on a true story. A girl I knew got used at a party, and the next day she felt a lot of regret. The lyrics are 50/50 fact and fiction, but there are no political lyrics. I guess you can say that the songs are more about normal day-to-day stuff than before.

BATHORY has been a tremendous inspiration for many Death- and Black Metal-bands. Are you listening to any of these bands yourself?

- No, but I have plans, producing albums for other Death- and Black Metal bands. I have experienced everything in this business, and I would like to pass this knowledge on to other and younger bands, and give them the same chances. Black Metal still is a big part of my heart, even though my brain isn't into it anymore. I am not a Satanist any longer! Satanism, as I see it, is about freeing one self from Christianity. Over the years, I realized that Christianity is bullshit, and as Satanism is a product of the Christianity, that's fake as well! It's better to believe in your own religion, and don't become blinded by symbols like pentagrams and inverted crosses. About all the things that have happened in Norway recently, I can't understand why there is so much hype and fuss about it. Of course it's a serious crime if you kill someone, but one can't judge a whole scene based upon the actions of one individual! Don't get me wrong: I don't

defend the actions of these people, but I can very well understand what they are trying to do. They want to make a religious point! It's wrong to burn other people's homes, but no one lives in a church but God.

They must do what they want - I have received a lot of letters from these guys during the BATHORY years, but I never thought they would actually put their plans into life. I guess I should have been a better source of inspiration for these guys. I don't know? But then again - politicians and prime ministers behave like assholes too, but I don't see any of them going to jail. Some murders have been committed, but people are dying every day anyway?

A lot of bands claim that all ideas are used, and it's impossible to come up with something fresh and new. Still, you have proven over and over the ability to change the expression of BATHORY, without losing the integrity?

- Well, there's actually some truth to what people say - most ideas are used. In the western world, we only have eight musical notes and twelve scales, so it's indeed limited when it comes to making new music. The only thing you can do as a musician is to change your attitude and the way you approach your instrument.

Quorthon is a magical and catchy name. When and why did you choose this name?

- I guess it was in the end of the '70ies or beginning of the '80ies, and I realized that KISS used fake names. Later I found out that a lot of other bands did this too, so I guess I just did what all the other bands did. But we were very serious about getting names that were hard to pronounce! Quorthon was the one chosen to fight the spirit of Christ on judgment day, and I was so fascinated by this name, so I decided to adopt to it. A final message for your fans in Norway, Quorthon?

- I respect the fact if there are BATHORY fans out there who don't like the new songs and this album, but please understand my wish to do another album after six BATHORY releases! This is a project based on entertainment, it's all about having fun. "Album" is not the end of BATHORY; this is a one-off from me as a musician!

Håkon Grav/SCREAM MAGAZINE 1994/2004





BATHORY

When BATHORY release "Requiem" back in '96 our friend Stephen O'Malley did this interview with Quorthon for his DESCEND MAGAZINE. And I thought it would be interesting to re-print this in our jubilee issue and also as a part of our tribute to BATHORY. Thank you!

Hail Quorthon, how are you doing this evening?

- I'm fine though I've just had some sort of shit going on with my throat, it goes with the season, cold winds and icy winds nowadays you know... otherwise I'm fine.

After a few years rest, you have decided to release another album as mighty BATHORY. It is great to see you continue the epes. What can you tell us about this new album?

- Yeah, it's been a while, right? Well, what can I tell you about the new album? It was recorded in the beginning of July this year. I believe it took about three days to lay down the guitars, bass and drums. Then there was a whole month of holidays, which prevented us from keeping on recording or laying down the vocals etc. etc. Then in the beginning of September we could finally do the rest of the shit. I'll be out the second week of October I believe, and then what can I tell you about it? Well, it's sure as hell not based on a bunch of songs that wound up at around fifteen minutes and where each and everyone of them begins with an intro for about a minute and a half and then after a decade or two of monotone pile of shit it all ends as if it was the end of the world and not just a song. In other words it is nothing close to what we have done lately ("Blood Fire Death", "Hammerheart" or "Twilight Of The Gods"). Yet it is far away from that speedy noise we produced back in the mid and early '80ies. All I know is that there is not a word on Satan or Odin, there are no fuck-ups in the playing, and it is by far the fastest and most brutal stuff that I have ever heard BATHORY do. But really what the album are really like can only the fans themselves say. I am partial and the stuff and it is too close in time for me have had any distance to it.

Does the album "Requiem" have any relation to the never released album in 1987? For that matter, why was that album "Fire And Ice" never released?

- The album recorded this July entitled "Requiem" has no relation other than the title itself with the session we did in '89-'90 that carried the same title as working title, from this 'never released' session of '89-'90 only one song has been released, "Crawl To Your Cross", which eventually ended on "Jubileum vol. 1". The rest of the material from that session (or sessions really) is really not good enough and just a bunch of super-duper-ultra-extra-fast noise and screams with no real motive or clue. We were just having fun letting off a lot of steam in the process. I really doubt this material will ever be released. To be honest I shouldn't have told the press about this or the other so called 'not released' album (I'll get to that one later on) coz after that went out in the press a never ending flow of fan mail has requested these two 'albums' to be released tomorrow practically. So the only thing that the new album and that 'never released' album have in common is its title, then to the other so-called 'never released' album of BATHORY. You mention an album done in '87 entitled "Fire And Ice". We recorded 24 songs for a double album entitled "Blood On Ice" in (I'm not quite sure about the exact date I'm afraid) the break between "Blood Fire Death" and "Hammerheart". This whole session turned out really great. It was a sort of a theme album with a warped version of the original Conan story and our version of the Nordic Mythology. Although the songs were really great and we really loved the idea of a double album (remember that CD's were not household stuff here in Europe in those days for bands in the league where BATHORY played) somewhere down the line we realized that some of our fans might not have the money to buy a double album and wound up listening to second or even third generation MC-copies. Secondly, we understood that the complicated Swedish history and the whole Viking sound being really a white spot on the Metal map these days would be rather difficult for a lot of our fans into the band coz of the Satanic stuff and enormous speed and shit. That's why "Blood On Ice" was placed on ice (Sic). But, and I don't think many know this, "Valhalla", a song from "Blood On Ice", was recorded once again and released on "Hammerheart". The thing is the same here as with that not released session mentioned earlier. I really don't think that any of the material from "Blood On Ice" will be released. But if I would change my mind in the future and decide to release it anyway I would need to really tell people in a sort of 'letter' in the CD that the album was recorded years ago and the whole story behind it. People would probably only get MANOWAR in their thoughts when hearing it anyway and that would not be too good I guess. I can tell you one more thing, when we did "Blood On Ice" we were signed to MUSIC FR NATIONS in the U.K. and they had another act called ONSLAUGHT. They found out that our album was going to be titled "Blood On Ice" and they had no title for their new album. Some weeks later I find out that their new album is titled "Blood Upon Ice" and of course we couldn't release our album bearing a similar name being on the same label and all. By the way, we left that label very soon after that coz they were very small in Europe although they were the biggest Metal label in the U.K. in those days. I

should round this off by just saying that eventually ONSLAUGHT changed their title to something else anyway...

Musically, your style has changed quite a bit over the years as well... where does this new album stand, musically? Any chance you will ever put out another release in the vein of "The Return..." or "Under The Sign Of The Black Mark"?

- When we did "The Return" and "Under The Sign Of The Black Mark" we were really terrible musicians and we worked in a private studio down a basement in a southern suburb to Stockholm equipped with only a 12-track desk and a small FX-rock from the end of the '60ies. When our music became more and more complex it sometimes could be as much as three or four different sounds on one track, you could have a horse running by in the beginning of a song then a lead guitar in the middle - still on the same track, and so finally perhaps a short slab of acoustic guitar at the very end or fade out still on the same track. You can imagine what this meant when trying to mix a whole song containing not only the basic instruments but also 12 harmonies mixed down onto one track, horses, wind and thunder, church bells and acoustic guitars effect, drums and guitar solo's etc. I tell you we went through hell at times, especially when we did "Blood Fire Death" and "Hammerheart", both recorded in this small studio (HEAVENSHORE) where all our albums except for "The Return...", "Twilight Of The Gods" and "Requiem" were done. So to really answer your question when we can produce another album like "The Return..." or "Under The Sign..." I think we are not talking the mood or sound of these two albums or the kind of music that we did all those years ago, we are talking really about growth and becoming better musicians and all that lot. If you really mean brutal shit and pace till your balls break you'll have it all on this new album coz it is the fastest stuff we have ever done. The whole reason why we did this album at all was this... I went out in Europe to do some promo for my solo album "Album". When I met all these folks from magazines, radio and TV, I realized that they were very sad that there might not be another BATHORY album. They all kept on talking about how big BATHORY really was to a lot of people and how much we had meant to a whole generation of bands around the world. And all this made me wonder if I really shouldn't just go back home after having done all the promo stuff and really try to sit down with my electric guitar and produce some brutal stuff. I thought that I was really unable to do this having disclosed myself off from the street-beat for almost nine years listening to classical music only. But it was actually easy and within two weeks I had written all the material for this new album. To get back to your question really... yes, we have changed over the years and the reason for that is musical freedom as a musician and an artist you really need that kind of freedom to expand and challenge yourself writing new music all the time, finding new sides of yourself and broaden your horizons. I know it really sounds standard and dull but it's the truth. When I was a kid myself and a fan I hated bands that went on in the press like this and then changing from one album to another. But now I know different, I hope this answers your question.

Over the past decade your style has evolved (theme wise) from the Satanic into an Asatru/Odinist, Viking pride style. Does this continue onward on "Requiem" or do they change direction once again? What can you tell us of some of the topics you delve into this time around?

- Well, it is the same thing here as with the music, so see above. But to add I can say that lyrics really mean a lot and much more than the music tell you where you are. I have never been ashamed of any of the stuff that we have done musically or lyrically. But these days' magazines tend to pay much more attention to the lyrics than they used to five or ten years ago. But then of course it was all Satanic in those days anyway. It seems like there's a whole god damn lockdown out there that describes a band's lyric-identity which is approaching the whole issue the wrong way, not that lyrics shouldn't be important - they are. But to label a band purely Satanic occult Odinnistic or what the fuck ever is really wrong. I am not the right person to say that I hate it when bands or people are labeled this or that coz ten years ago I was asked in the very first interview I did for a German magazine what type of Metal we played (Coz back then in the end of '84 or so a new thing - Thrash Metal - was found and Black Metal was already out there) and being a cocky little son of a bitch I simply answered that we played Death Metal coz most of our songs dealt with death... little did I know that when bands in Europe started to diversify a little from what was known as pure Black Metal magazines started to label these as Death Metal acts. So should I really stretch my damn neck a bit and feel proud of having contributed with at least something for the history. Regarding the new album it touches nowhere on the Satanic topics or Odinnism or any of that shit, although I have to confess that I still haven't left the bit of criticizing Christianity as much as I can. But most of the time the new album deals with death in various ways... post mortem, war, murder, suicide, genocide and the death of values of man etc. etc.

On a similar topic, I wonder if you ever took Satanism seriously, back in those days, or were it more simply for the sensation of it all? Has your opinion on the subject changed over the years or did the interest just fade?

- Did I really take Satanism for real at any one time? Sure I did... in '82-'85 I was so deep down into that shit I even joined a witchcraft circle here in Stockholm (I lied about my age when joining) and we had great Satanic Sabbaths I tell you, sex and stuff (but I never ever tried the drugs). But once I got the point where I actually read the whole bible to get some more meat on the bones when learning more about the enemy I realized that Satan and Satanism was a product of Christianity and that I found Christianity a super mega bluff then Satanism had to be it too. The reason why I turned to Satanism in the first place was not just trying to be rebellious but also simply coz my whole person was and still is so consumed with hatred towards the Christian history, belief and theory. Some time in '86 I turned my inner eyes and ears towards what people today call Odinism or Asatru or whatever even though these labels were yet to be invented I guess... at least within the Metal horizons pre-Christian Sweden fascinated me and gave me a new way to criticize Christianity that was much more true than butt-fucking masked women on an altar in a dimmed basement somewhere and then spray the word Satan in ten feet letters all over a public wall down town at night or something. Has my opinion on Satanism changed over the years? Well I nowadays see it as just a way to tickle people's imagination but I still wouldn't use it as an idea for a song for the future... I've done all that already and haven't starved or felt ashamed forever having done it.

Which brings me to the next subject, Odinism. Did this subject hit home in a more powerful way? Like a reformed fire in your blood?

- I tell you, this whole reborn nationalism we see in Sweden nowadays is a result of us picking up on the Scandinavian mythology and pre-Christian Sweden all those years ago on "Blood Fire Death" and "Hammerheart" (Sweden has been 'Christian' for almost one thousand one hundred years now). This has caused us some problems coz the papers being all and all out in favor of all the inter-racial marriages and births happening here in Sweden since like eight or ten years now are sure always to dig deep into anything that might have influenced youngsters to learn how to sing our national hymn and on so claiming this particularly source of inspiration being all and all out pro-nazi etc. etc. But this was never our intention in the first place all those years ago... we just wanted to do something original. While all these German industrial area bands kept on singing about that damn wall and pollution and US Bay Area acts tried to copy SLAYER or METALLICA the best way they could, we wanted to be really first to do something nobody else dared to or could get away with doing. Being a Swedish act it was just natural I guess once we had taken the step to jump off that Satanic bandwagon, not meaning we had jumped on that damn thing to begin with. I'm led to believe that we were there creating all that shit together with acts like VENOM, HELLHAMMER and SLAYER I guess...

What is Odinism to you? Do you consider it to be just an interest or is it something greater?

- It is certainly nothing 'far greater'. What you call Odinism was just simply a different topic for the lyrics and not a sign of a different sort of awareness or national pride, well a little maybe. It means nothing to me I'm afraid to say other than they are great stories although no more true than the Christian shit.

Quorthon/BATHORY



Texts such as Snorre's Edda hold much in the form of logical and practical philosophy, as well as spiritual. Do you draw inspiration from such texts? What else inspires you, as far as BATHORY is concerned, and besides BATHORY?

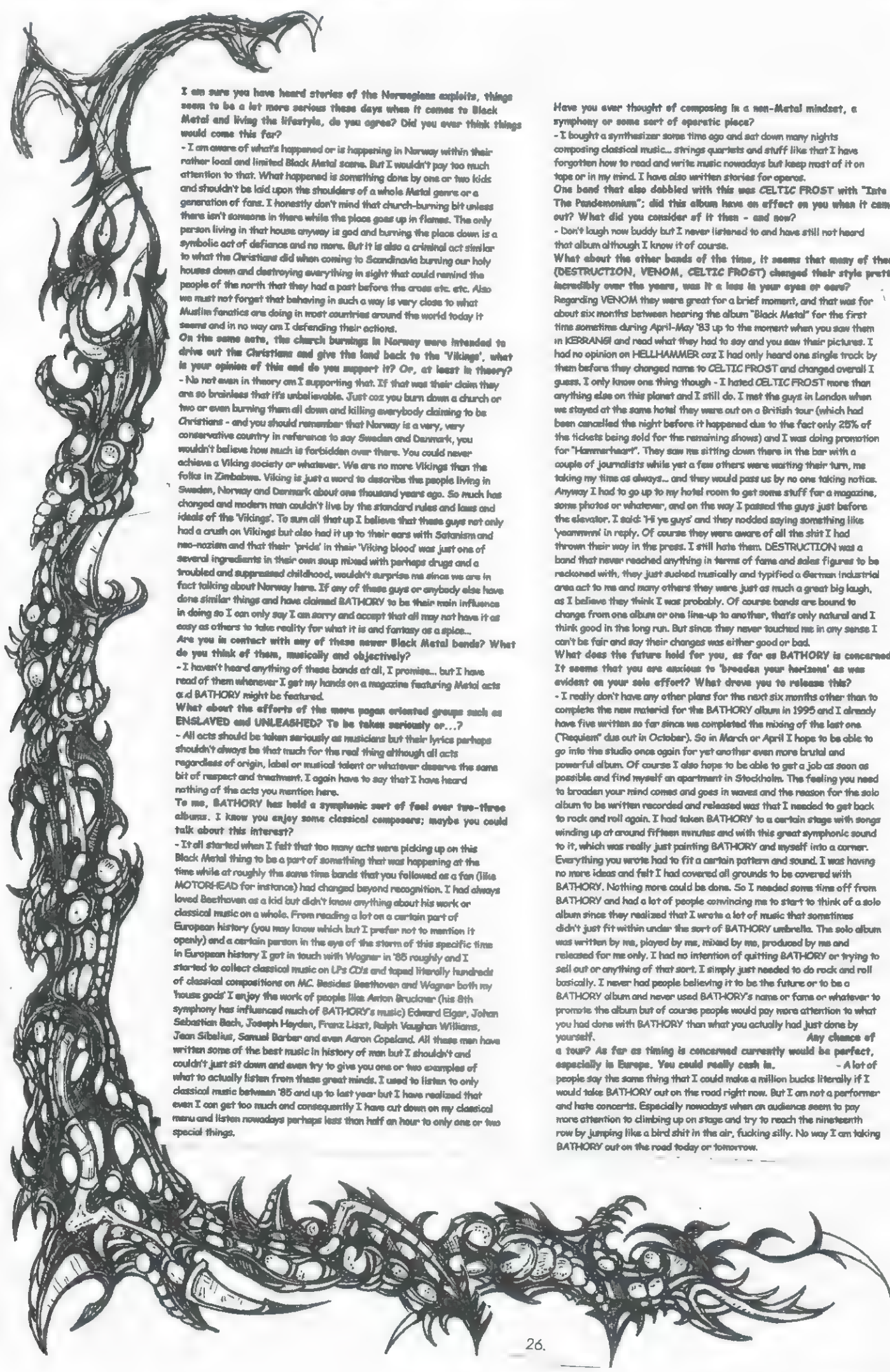
- The Snorre Edda, which is the very oldest written script of Swedish or Nordic history preserved, hasn't meant anything to me at all I guess. Because it is as close to a modern Swede as say the story about Excalibur and Merlin would be to you. (Thinking by your name that you are English by blood). But from an academic point of view it is sure an interesting piece of document as is the Excalibur and Merlin stories, historically at least. When I wrote the lyrics for a BATHORY song, no matter from what BATHORY era, what did inspire me could have been a painting, a film, a book I might have read or simply just something I forced out of myself when being late with the lyrics for the studio. Very few times I can recall having been especially influenced by a certain specific thing or whatever in the sense that I could say that this particular song was inspired by this particular book or film or painting. I remember when reading very much about King Karl XII (Swedish king from the age of 16 to his death at 35 or something - see how deep my historic pride has sunk details such as these into my memory ah ah ah) who is a great hero among Swedish nationalists etc. coz he took on both the Norwegians the Danes the Poles the Germans the French and the Russians (and with them the Lithuanians) all at the same time in the years 1703-1718 or something... and he beat them all up until losing to the Russians deep into the Russian marshlands in 1709 and being assassinated by a anonymous gunman in a trench in Norway around 1718 or whenever that happened. Anyway... from reading about him intensively for a couple of months it inspired me to write a song called « Marching off to War » which surely was recorded but never released. And the story I guess could go on... but you get my point right?

It seems, from my point of view, that there has been a rekindling of traditional Swedish and Scandinavian pride and lifestyle in the youth? Do you see this or am I hallucinating?

- No, you're absolutely right. But here in Sweden although not at such a paranoid level as in Germany, nationalism is a very hot issue. Everything that has got anything to do with Sweden or Swedish history is a bit taboo over here, don't ask me why. I can give you a very up to date example of what sort of taboo I'm talking about here. When the Swedish national team went on to win the bronze medal in the world football cup 1994 (soccer to you suckers) in the USA recently (which was a great shock to all of us coz we would have been happy if we would have reached the quarter-finals or something) and the players got back home the first question (when referring to the hundreds of thousands of Swedes filling the streets and town squares in Stockholm and in any other major city or town of Sweden shouting happy and waving their Swedish flags crazy from joy) was if all the Africans and Arabians and South Americans in Sweden would not be upset about all this Sweden-Sweden Sweden and if it was a really such a healthy thing going so blue and yellow (our national colors mind you) coz intentionally it might be taken for racism. But underground if that's the light way to describe it (and above too it seems these days) no one gives a shit and kicks the shit out of anyone claiming you to be a nazi or psycho when you say or show off that you are proud of either your nationality or history or whatever...

You've seen it all, from the beginning of Black Metal and Thrash to its peak, then Death Metal set in during the late '80ies. Currently, Black Metal is making resurgence in the Metal scene and most of these bands and many in this magazine claim BATHORY as a major influence. What do you think about this? Does it surprise you?

- It doesn't surprise me and shouldn't really. But somewhere deep down inside of me I try to keep all from of thinking in that way as far away from me as possible. I know that after our two first albums came out (or even as early as after the first one) bands started to use long long intros and effects on their demos and albums. I know of bands taking their name from a BATHORY song title or just a word or a phrase from a lyric (Like there are bands called EQUIMANTHORN and HAMMERHEART and there are magazines called UNDER THE SIGN... and TWILIGHT MAGAZINE etc. etc.). All this should really matter me in a way and it does... it sure does but I am not too sure whether I am that well informed of anything that goes on out there or in the underground. Sure what is known as Black Metal is bound to come back and sure have recently. New generations of Metal fans will pick up their guitars and find inspiration from either be it METALLICA coz of their great commercial success or a 'underground' type of band regardless if this band has been around for ages like BATHORY or even HELLHAMMER or not. If a guy in a band or a band on a whole claim BATHORY to be his or their greatest influence you are of course very happy and proud in a sense I guess BATHORY could never have survived all these years without concerts, tours and what have you if it wouldn't have been for the sort of cult status that we have been able to always be there fresh and known to everybody although (I am very positive) not always liked by everybody.



I am sure you have heard stories of the Norwegians exploits, things seem to be a lot more serious these days when it comes to Black Metal and living the lifestyle, do you agree? Did you ever think things would come this far?

- I am aware of what's happened or is happening in Norway within their rather local and limited Black Metal scene. But I wouldn't pay too much attention to that. What happened is something done by one or two kids and shouldn't be laid upon the shoulders of a whole Metal genre or a generation of fans. I honestly don't mind that church-burning bit unless there isn't someone in there while the place goes up in flames. The only person living in that house anyway is god and burning the place down is a symbolic act of defiance and no more. But it is also a criminal act similar to what the Christians did when coming to Scandinavia burning our holy houses down and destroying everything in sight that could remind the people of the north that they had a past before the cross etc. etc. Also we must not forget that behaving in such a way is very close to what Muslim fanatics are doing in most countries around the world today it seems and in no way am I defending their actions.

On the same note, the church burnings in Norway were intended to drive out the Christians and give the land back to the 'Vikings', what is your opinion of this and do you support it? Or, at least in theory?

- No not even in theory am I supporting that. If that was their claim they are so brainless that it's unbelievable. Just coz you burn down a church or two or even burning them all down and killing everybody claiming to be Christians - and you should remember that Norway is a very, very conservative country in reference to say Sweden and Denmark, you wouldn't believe how much is forbidden over there. You could never achieve a Viking society or whatever. We are no more Vikings than the folks in Zimbabwe. Viking is just a word to describe the people living in Sweden, Norway and Denmark about one thousand years ago. So much has changed and modern man couldn't live by the standard rules and laws and ideals of the 'Vikings'. To sum all that up I believe that these guys not only had a crush on Vikings but also had it up to their ears with Satanism and neo-nazism and that their 'pride' in their 'Viking blood' was just one of several ingredients in their own soup mixed with perhaps drugs and a troubled and suppressed childhood, wouldn't surprise me since we are in fact talking about Norway here. If any of these guys or anybody else have done similar things and have claimed BATHORY to be their main influence in doing so I can only say I am sorry and accept that all may not have it as easy as others to take reality for what it is and fantasy as a spice...

Are you in contact with any of these newer Black Metal bands? What do you think of them, musically and objectively?

- I haven't heard anything of these bands at all, I promise... but I have read of them whenever I get my hands on a magazine featuring Metal acts and BATHORY might be featured.

What about the efforts of the more pagan oriented groups such as ENSLAVED and UNLEASHED? To be taken seriously or...?

- All acts should be taken seriously as musicians but their lyrics perhaps shouldn't always be that much for the real thing although all acts regardless of origin, label or musical talent or whatever deserve the same bit of respect and treatment. I again have to say that I have heard nothing of the acts you mention here.

To me, BATHORY has held a symphonic sort of feel over two-three albums. I know you enjoy some classical composers; maybe you could talk about this interest?

- It all started when I felt that too many acts were picking up on this Black Metal thing to be a part of something that was happening at the time while at roughly the same time bands that you followed as a fan (like MOTORHEAD for instance) had changed beyond recognition. I had always loved Beethoven as a kid but didn't know anything about his work or classical music on a whole. From reading a lot on a certain part of European history (you may know which but I prefer not to mention it openly) and a certain person in the eye of the storm of this specific time in European history I got in touch with Wagner in '85 roughly and I started to collect classical music on LPs CDs and taped literally hundreds of classical compositions on MC. Besides Beethoven and Wagner both my 'house gods' I enjoy the work of people like Anton Bruckner (his 8th symphony has influenced much of BATHORY's music) Edward Elgar, Johan Sebastian Bach, Joseph Haydn, Franz Liszt, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Jean Sibelius, Samuel Barber and even Aaron Copeland. All these men have written some of the best music in history of man but I shouldn't and couldn't just sit down and even try to give you one or two examples of what to actually listen from these great minds. I used to listen to only classical music between '85 and up to last year but I have realized that even I can get too much and consequently I have cut down on my classical menu and listen nowadays perhaps less than half an hour to only one or two special things.

Have you ever thought of composing in a non-Metal mindset, a symphony or some sort of apocalyptic piece?

- I bought a synthesizer some time ago and sat down many nights composing classical music... strings quartets and stuff like that I have forgotten how to read and write music nowadays but keep most of it on tape or in my mind. I have also written stories for operas.

One band that also dabbled with this was CELTIC FROST with 'Taste The Pandemonium'; did this album have an effect on you when it came out? What did you consider of it then - and now?

- Don't laugh now buddy but I never listened to and have still not heard that album although I know it of course.

What about the other bands of the time, it seems that many of them (DESTRUCTION, VENOM, CELTIC FROST) changed their style pretty incredibly over the years, was it a loss in your eyes or ears?

Regarding VENOM they were great for a brief moment, and that was for about six months between hearing the album 'Black Metal' for the first time sometime during April-May '83 up to the moment when you saw them in KERRANG! and read what they had to say and you saw their pictures. I had no opinion on HELLHAMMER coz I had only heard one single track by them before they changed name to CELTIC FROST and changed overall I guess. I only know one thing though - I hated CELTIC FROST more than anything else on this planet and I still do. I met the guys in London when we stayed at the same hotel they were out on a British tour (which had been cancelled the night before it happened due to the fact only 25% of the tickets being sold for the remaining shows) and I was doing promotion for 'Hammerheart'. They saw me sitting down there in the bar with a couple of journalists while yet a few others were waiting their turn, me taking my time as always... and they would pass us by no one taking notice. Anyway I had to go up to my hotel room to get some stuff for a magazine, some photos or whatever, and on the way I passed the guys just before the elevator. I said 'Hi ye guys' and they nodded saying something like 'Yoammmmm' in reply. Of course they were aware of all the shit I had thrown their way in the press. I still hate them. DESTRUCTION was a band that never reached anything in terms of fame and sales figures to be reckoned with, they just sucked musically and typified a German industrial area act to me and many others they were just as much a great big laugh, as I believe they think I was probably. Of course bands are bound to change from one album or one line-up to another, that's only natural and I think good in the long run. But since they never touched me in any sense I can't be fair and say their changes was either good or bad.

What does the future hold for you, as far as BATHORY is concerned? It seems that you are anxious to 'broaden your horizons' as was evident on your solo effort? What drove you to release this?

- I really don't have any other plans for the next six months other than to complete the new material for the BATHORY album in 1995 and I already have five written so far since we completed the mixing of the last one ('Requiem' due out in October). So in March or April I hope to be able to go into the studio once again for yet another even more brutal and powerful album. Of course I also hope to be able to get a job as soon as possible and find myself an apartment in Stockholm. The feeling you need to broaden your mind comes and goes in waves and the reason for the solo album to be written recorded and released was that I needed to get back to rock and roll again. I had taken BATHORY to a certain stage with songs winding up at around fifteen minutes and with this great symphonic sound to it, which was really just painting BATHORY and myself into a corner. Everything you wrote had to fit a certain pattern and sound. I was having no more ideas and felt I had covered all grounds to be covered with BATHORY. Nothing more could be done. So I needed some time off from BATHORY and had a lot of people convincing me to start to think of a solo album since they realized that I wrote a lot of music that sometimes didn't just fit within under the sort of BATHORY umbrella. The solo album was written by me, played by me, mixed by me, produced by me and released for me only. I had no intention of quitting BATHORY or trying to sell out or anything of that sort. I simply just needed to do rock and roll basically. I never had people believing it to be the future or to be a BATHORY album and never used BATHORY's name or fame or whatever to promote the album but of course people would pay more attention to what you had done with BATHORY than what you actually had just done by yourself.

Any chance of a tour? As far as timing is concerned currently would be perfect, especially in Europe. You could really cash in.

- A lot of people say the same thing that I could make a million bucks literally if I would take BATHORY out on the road right now. But I am not a performer and hate concerts. Especially nowadays when an audience seem to pay more attention to climbing up on stage and try to reach the nineteenth row by jumping like a bird shit in the air, fucking silly. No way I am taking BATHORY out on the road today or tomorrow.

You have played a few live shows (in Stockholm and N.Y.C.) Why the lack of this over the years? Describe a perfect BATHORY performance to us unfortunately...

- I didn't know we played Stockholm and New York, that was a complete surprise to me and I only formed the band and have remained the only original member since February 1983. Actually the reason why we never played here at home in Stockholm was the complete lack of places to play. There was no rock scene here at the time not until Europe had a hit or two and then everybody was going to look like and sound like them over here which made it just about impossible to find suitable members for a band like BATHORY whenever I needed a new bass player or drummer. Huge member problems, lack of a local rock scene and my fading interest in trying to get this shit on stage culminated sometimes around the turn of '85-'86 so I decided (backed up by my own personal decision to make BATHORY more elaborate in the studio) to skip that whole idea of taking this act onto a stage. Since then people have been trying to convince me to go on a stage every damn week. Therefore I couldn't describe the perfect BATHORY performance to you.

Is there a thing that you have, or haven't done, with BATHORY in the past, which you regret now? What one thing would you change now, looking back?

- If I'd known then what I know today I would never have published any pictures of myself and I would never have done that video. I spent 25,000 SEK (about US\$ 5,000) out on my own pocket to pay for food for all involved the renting of horses, Armour for the knights and robes for the pilgrims etc. etc.... the petrol and car fees and so on. If I had known that I wasn't going to be able to see one second of the nineteen hours of film we shot for the video I would never have had people talking into doing that shit. I have never seen it and never will. But I managed to get back the original master copies from assorted video channels in Europe and managed to burn them. I don't think that there is anything more I would have done in a different way, just small details such as paying more attention to singing a bit better and taking more time mixing the albums. Where do you see yourself and BATHORY in another 10 years?

- BATHORY won't be around in ten years from now. I can't tell you when the end will come... it could be possible that I decide to end it next month or in five years from now. Mind you I thought I was never going to be able to write Metal again after "Twilight Of The Gods" and the fans will be the judges when they hear "Requiem" to decide whether I have or not. As for myself in ten years... I don't know... I hate living really and just live for every day. I have no plans for the future and just a few goals in life but when they are accomplished I really don't know what to do with my life. OK, take your mind to a different setting, you are sitting in a bar and meet someone, things move along and you mention that you are a musician; they are clueless to this and ask about your band. What do you say?

Let me tell you a real story to give you an example of how private I can be. I met this pussy (or girl if you like) and still after we had been going for a while I still hadn't told her about BATHORY. But whenever we went shopping and passed the CD department and she went off to look at the stuff that interested her I'd be off checking how many BATHORY CDs they had left since that last time around. She'd know from my smile later on that I had been over there somewhere checking up on my bands' CDs and she'd be really frustrated not knowing shit. I don't know if that answers your question but that is as close as I can come to real life. Anything further you'd like to add?

- Just that... I wish that all the folks that has ever been into BATHORY at some time during the eleven years we have been around have had patience with us changing so much and sounding so different from one album to another, once they began to like us we changed you know. Check out the new album and judge us from there. And also that everybody who's been around for all those years supporting us even if so just in their hearts cheers to you all mates!

Thank you for answering this inquiry; it is an honor and a privilege to feature you in these pages! Hall! Any final words?

- Well, what can I say? I hope that you can use these answers and that you will enjoy the new album. Unfortunately there are no photos to send you at the moment; we haven't even thought of that. We reckoned that the album cover would do. We wanted to let the music do the talking this time.

Stephen O'Malley, this interview provided by Mathieu Ghislain.



New Renaissance Records Presents...

BATHORY UNDER THE SIGN OF THE BLACK MARK

ON LP AND CASSETTE

*"This is probably
one of the best
Death Metal LPs
ever released!"*

SLAYER-MAGAZINE
(Norway)

*"Quorthon and
company are back
with one of the best
records to come out
this year!"*

DAVE HAYES
Music Makers





VENOM

Quorthon is unique among the fallen front line of Black Metal because he did not die at a childish age. Unlike quite a few of his followers, he lived long enough to see the effect of his dark arts on the world. In person, he was mercurial and melodramatic, but highly assured of his unrepentant music and his words. Remember, there only was one Quorthon, and he was a challenge.

When did you first hear VENOM?

- I asked some of my friends who were also into SABBATH and MOTORHEAD who knew about VENOM. There was one album available in Sweden, and I went to the store with a couple friends and we checked that album out. And we were like 'Hey man, check that out, listen to those guys. They're doing exactly what we want to do on our record!' We were barely aware of this underground thing happening, because there were no fanzines around in those days, particularly not in Sweden. I believe that in six months everything just exploded -- we heard about bands like SODOM, HELHAMMER, DESTRUCTION, POSSESSED, KREATOR, SLAYER, METALLICA, VENOM, VOIVOD, and VULCAIN from France. A lot of them, I never heard a single song.

Don't you think it was effective for you to have such a limited exposure to the outside world?

- Ninety-nine percent of everything was in the heads of people. You never hear about our early problems, and the guys coming down looking like Bon Jovi. And I'd say buckle up a little bit, get dressed up in some spiked leather underwear, and be prepared to sweat. And they'd say they wanted to get laid and get into concerts and I'd tell them that wasn't the point. Whenever there was interviews, it was always my pictures and my answers. Even though we had pictures made, I didn't want to use them, because I knew I'd just kick those guys out in two weeks, anyway. After some time, when the character of the fan mail started to changed, we realized people were drawn to the band because of the mysteriousness. It wasn't something we created, it just happened. I mean, the quality of the pictures in the fanzines in those days! It worked. Other people created it for us. People would be very interested just by a shitty picture. It wasn't a situation that we made. I wasn't kicking guys out just to keep a lack of pictures out there. It was just something that happened.

But it happened in a way that set people's imaginations on fire.

- It's the force of ignorance. When you tell people the true story, you're ruining their image of you and idea of your band. If I go: 'Kate Bush,' 'friend of mine playing drums for six years,' 'drum machine on the solo album,' 'patching up a little bit of the drums on the first couple albums on the snare.' They go uh-uh, they don't want that. That would be like Santa Claus taking off his false beard. I don't know if there's any other band with these problems, being nailed down with so many rumors. Every time I talk about it, I kill some small part of me and the band. Because ultimately in the end, someone will have to take it for fact. I'm not the son of Satan. I'm not the fastest guitar player in the world. BATHORY was never the best band in the world. We may have been very innovative, but we never toured. So we had all the time in the world to just go into the studio to just elaborate on whatever. We just happened to be Swedish, we picked up on the Nordic stuff which later became a fashion. Had we been from New York, we would have had to pay whatever to get a gig or a contract, and follow the trends. We didn't have those kinds of pressures. And once we had done stuff like acoustic guitars with backing harmony vocals and seagulls flying by, people would accept that. SLAYER could never get away with that.

And the mystery was amplified because you never toured.

- I was never a part of that physically, anyway. It would have been extremely difficult. It would have been a completely different story had I lived in New York City, or anywhere else things were happening.

What about your plans to film an outdoor video on a helipad with a circle of a dozen bass drums and huge pyro everywhere?

- Yeah, that's true. I was planning a lot of stuff, and people were always asking me when we was gonna play live. That must have been around '86 or '87. Everybody was looking for video. I sold something like sure, let's do it; we're gonna spend a million bucks on a video, we're gonna use an airplane field, we're gonna use this kind of bombs, we're going to use 53 million Marshall stacks. And they said it's gonna cost a lot of money just to buy food for all the people involved. I thought they were taking back their words very fast. I actually always wanted to hire a theatre and put on one big fucking show, and have everybody in the world there and film that. When we finally did do a video, it was put together by some fucking asshole, and I wasn't allowed to see any of it, not one single second. And he was cutting the film together without ever hearing the song. That's the story I was told. Up until today I haven't even it, I refuse to see it. Biggest thorn in my heart ever in this band. Never ever any more videos.



You switched from Satanism to Viking myths, but you never speak directly or politically about national identity.

- No, because I never wanna be used by any of those groups. 'Son of the North' is as far as I go. And then at a certain point, I grew up, and I just wanted to write songs about riding motorcycles fast and hot chicks. Today when you have 18-year old "Death Metal fans coming up and saying they like our first album as if it were recorded yesterday, and they really like the vocals. I'm like yeah, it's called harmonizers. But the problem is today that you have bands with so much makeup you can't see what they look like, so much harmonizer on the vocals that you can't hear the singing, so much noise going on you can't understand what they're playing, and the logo is so outrageous you can't understand what the band name is. If you criticize them, they will show up in the middle of the night stabbing you, or burn your house down. They're not doing themselves any favors, or the music genre any favors. It's different now, because you have old guys in their 30s who want to remember the old days, when we were all in the war together. And other times you have these guys who are 16 years old, and they're just into war paint. You can't tell them about Kate Bush and stuff. They'll just stare and say 'Are you serious?' You gotta be easy with these kids.

Have you ever collaborated with other known musicians without anyone knowing?

- I teamed up with Joey DeMaio. We were in the same hotel or something. I don't know if that counts. He's not an extreme Metal person, or from that group of bands. I was expecting this 11-foot, 20-inches seven hundred pound barbarian, and he turns out to be shoulder high, you know? With high heels and everything. Very very, uh, what's the English word? Very friendly and everything, full of respect, very professional. A good encounter. I wish that he didn't bring twelve-year old Swedish girls onstage when they play in Stockholm and try to tongue-kiss them, that's stupid. But we all have our own lives to live, and we live them. As long as they somehow can find their way back to 1983 or 1984, the first couple of albums. I was introduced to MANOWAR by the drummer we had in 1987. He was very much into them.

I wondered if you have any brothers or sisters?

- Yeah, quite too many of them. I don't even know when they're having birthdays. If you have too many of them — half-brothers and half-sisters as well — it's like you just don't care. None of them are interested in music, fortunately. And they're all very, very much younger than I am. My sister went to a rave party a couple weeks ago. She told me 'hey, nobody was drunk!' I said, yeah, let me tell you about medicine and stuff. She said, no everybody was so polite. And I said it's because they were all in their own world. But she was impressed that they were so friendly.

So you've never played music with them?

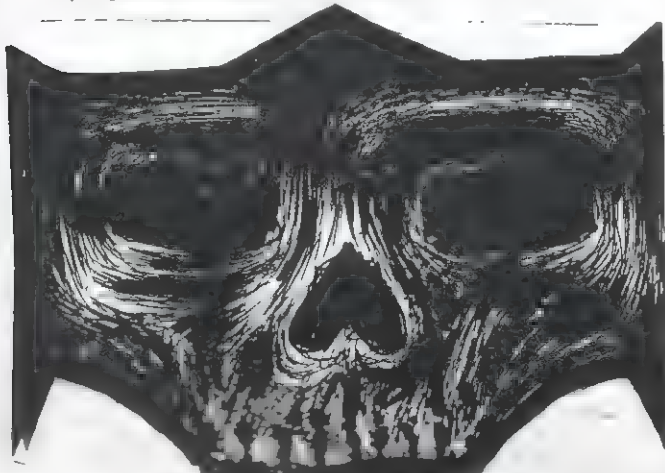
- Oh my god, that would be a sight. They're the most unmusical kind of characters I ever met. Except for my cat, who always licks my strings.

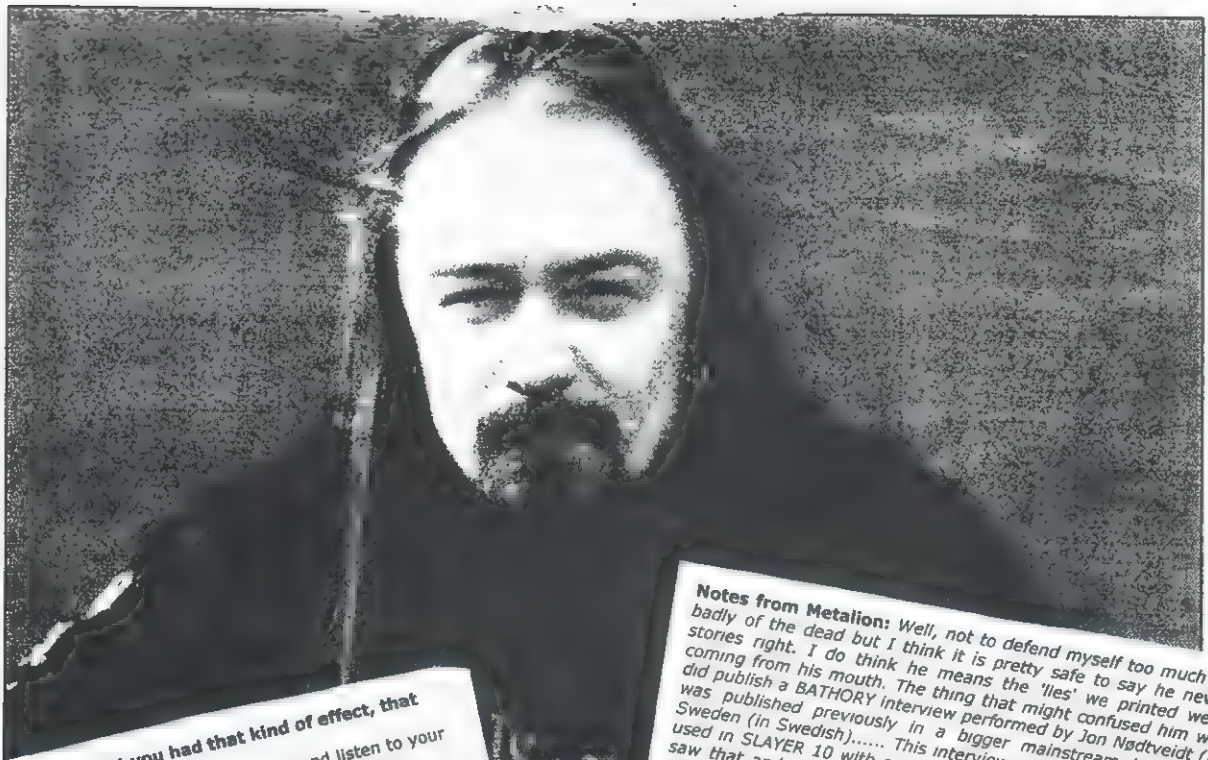
Did you teach yourself to breathe fire?

- No, there was this guy who taught me. He had been traveling around Europe, doing this street cabaret or whatever you call it. I just had to learn how to do it properly. I had been using everything from paraffin to petrol and everything. And I just wasn't able to produce those huge balls of fire. I promised never to tell anybody. I can tell you — there are three different liquids. One of them is water. You need water, because once the other two liquids are ignited, they will explode. When the water vaporizes, then you have the huge cloud. Plus there's no risk you catch fire. When I was like seven or eight, I'd take some cocoa powder, there's a lot of sugar in there, and just put it in a spoon and light that and blow. It was pretty cool, and it was dangerous — just like Arthur Brown.

A lot of people copied you — you wrote the blueprint for Black Metal.

- Sure, I wore chicken bones and big bones and skulls and pieces of meat, and chains and spiked leather and everything. Black candles and all that shit. Those pictures are around. You see those guys around today, and they're still wearing it! We're close to the 21st Century, and people are still wearing it. Like I said, it's part of their childhood, what they were listening to. The same with me and the whole first-generation extreme Metal scene. We lifted the appearance of KISS, the music of MOTORHEAD, and the lyrics of BLACK SABBATH. That's it. What's happening now is they're copying VENOM, BATHORY, HELLHAMMER, SODOM, and SLAYER. With a lot of makeup. We didn't have makeup in those days. Black Metal 12 years ago was a completely different thing. It was everything from the Satanic to the dark side of life, the occult and witchcraft, and swords and dragons. Today it's like hold a lighter to a church, slit a faggot up, and everything else like that. It doesn't have anything to do with music, so I cannot put those two things together.





Are you happy in some way that you had that kind of effect, that people would take you that seriously?

- Happy? I think for anybody to sit down in a basement and listen to your music, or anybody's music twenty-four hours a day, without having someone come by and knock on your door and say 'Hey, are you okay?' -- they're screwed up to begin with. A crime is a crime, no matter who commits it. And it doesn't have anything to do with music. Norway's a very conservative and strange country where the church has a lot of say. They're not allowed to show this and that on TV. The women come to Sweden to have an abortion. It's a fucked up country. It's one of the most beautiful countries in the world, but it's fucked up. Mainly because it lost its identity, squeezed in between England, Denmark, Germany and Sweden. For someone to grow up listening to bands like VENOM, CELTIC FROST, SODOM, SLAYER, us...if these bands are such a big part of a young man's growing up, of his life, you're bound to be inspired, or at least that's a big part of your thinking, and a big part of your life. When I grew up there was a lot about the Vietnam war, so I naturally the Vietnam war is a big part of my interest. It was quite natural to see bombs dropping down on a rice paddy in the village, you know. And the same thing with those guys. They were sending me a lot of letters -- I think -- because they wouldn't use their real names, and you cannot put these guys together with a letter ten years ago from Norway. I received a lot of letters from Norway in those days. I believe those were the same guys involved with the SLAYER MAGAZINE. SLAYER MAGAZINE wrote a lot of letters about me, and not even one percent of what they said was true. Also, they offended me. They said that I had offended Kerry King. SLAYER MAGAZINE had written that I had offended Kerry King so much that he was planning a lawsuit against me. I dunno what the story was all about. So I said, okay check the mag out, make a photocopy. I wanna see. You don't do stuff like that. Anyway, in that kind of music and lyrics, what they're doing today is just to relive their childhood. It's just sentimentality and nostalgia. But to take it on to killing people and burning churches down, it doesn't have anything to do with music. And for them to claim that my lyrics were the main source of inspiration for these actions? Sure as hell I went straight back to check my lyrics, and I couldn't find anything that said to slit someone up because of his sexual preference! I was talking about raping angels and masturbating on the gilded throne up there. I find it very hard imagining someone raping an angel, let alone masturbating on the golden throne up there. These are abstract fantasy lyrics! For anybody not being able to take that as a horror story -- like I say, an extension of TALES FROM THE CRYPT or BLACK SABBATH -- you're screwed up to begin with. It's not my responsibility. We have freedom of speech, and freedom of information. Freedom to rock. The horror genre is not to be blamed for something, an isolated thing that happened years ago, that people are still talking about.

Notes from Metalion: Well, not to defend myself too much or to speak badly of the dead but I think it is pretty safe to say he never gets his stories right. I do think he means the 'lies' we printed were actually coming from his mouth. The thing that might confused him was that we did publish a BATHORY interview performed by Jon Nødtveidt (RIP) which was published previously in a bigger mainstream Metal magazine in Sweden (in Swedish)..... This interview was translated into English to be used in SLAYER 10 with proper permission by the author. So, maybe he saw that and never remembered doing it for SLAYER, so in his mind it would be lies. It is interesting, and kinda sad that we never cleared up that situation. And besides, his view on Norway compared to other 'civilized' countries is pretty fucking out there, I guess that goes back to Swedes saying Sweden is better than Norway and Norwegians doing exactly the same, which is stupid - we are equally fucked.

IN MEMORY OF QUORTHON

1966 - 2004

"Hail The Hordes - See You In Valhalla"

666

By Erik Sten

Edited by Metalion

Many people hears rumors about this Norwegian act 666, said to be the first Black Metal band from Norway. Years ago I was able to dig up some information about this band. I do admit this article is pretty weird but, whatever.....Its not like the world is filled with information about 666 anyway. First thing I noticed was the very strange English here and I assume it has been translated in a hasty way to English from Norwegian. Also my impression is that it was written back then and most likely published by one of the many Norwegian Punk 'zines of that time. It is a interesting piece I think.....But for those who claim that 666 was the first Norwegian Black Metal band I'd say they are wrong, historically it seems fairly interesting but I feel it isn't really much depth to this.....

In the spring of 1982 the Norwegian Punk band NORGEZ BANK drifted into Funk. Founder of the band, Alfén (Alf Krogseth) was frustrated. Alfén was the man behind the Euro Punk classic "Springtime In Belsen". In May 1982 he left NORGEZ BANK together with the drummer Knut Nilsen, to form Norway's presumable first Black Metal band. They were joined by Knut Sepplae - guitar and Bjørn "Bønna" Hellberg - bass/vocals - 666 was born. In June they played their first concert at a local Rock festival. Later that year Tom Arne Hermansen was taking over the vocals. Three years and a lot of gigs later it was all over.

On a small road in a Norwegian summer night 1983 a bus decorated with the symbol 666 pulls over to the side of the road. The driver turns around to see the chaos behind him: - "When the hell are you guys gonna start acting like human beings?" The bus shifts into gear, rolls out on the road and continues its long dark journey towards Tromsø. The non humans on the bus are the extreme Metal rockers 666 and their road crew on their way home from a gig in Harstad. Insane on alcohol, like drunken Indians in the wild west, and the most frantic of them all is of course a writer from the Norwegian music press - "Give me a beer!"

In Tromsø there was formed a circle of people who was capable of worshipping the band VENOM. These guys included 666 and a couple of others who don't want their names to be published. VENOM is the band that makes VENOM look like choirboys. Sickening lyrics of violent orgies and Satanic rituals, a view of women which is beyond the most perverted rape fantasies. VENOM represents a new expansion of what we know as music. A fucking raw, evil holocaust! Equipment includes nuclear warheads 125 Intercity express! WORLD WAR III!

666 is not culture - but a cultural phenomenon! A phenom en that never got them into any studio. The Norwegian society did everything to prevent 666 in possessing young and unfortified souls.

The music of 666 can be associated with corpse desecration, witch burning, necrophilia and total destruction practised on electric instruments and exploding amps. Regular Heavy Metal is by some theorists considered to be appreciated for its masculine fuck rhythm. In that case, its the sick fantasy about rape rhythm who makes you love 666. Lyrically their song "Smerten" ("The Pain" in English) speak for itself. Concerts are now finally starting to degenerate. Crosses turned upside down, dripping with oxblood. Tormented bodies discharges and the stage is covered in smoke of magnesium rain. Homemade angels are blown straight to hell while a Jesus figure (with a Glori and everything) is watching over the whole thing. Only one is holy for 666 - Satan! And gets worshipped with all possible means. 666 is not cool - it is serious. There are some boneheads in the circle around the group who doesn't understand the seriousness. But who

cares about a gang of brain dead assholes who think they found a local version of KISS? 666 is about cases of vodka, and a group of people who wander deep into the mighty forest to a small cabin. Little is known about those trips but it can be told at night time, the pentagram gets painted and the wax candles lit. Figure the rest out for yourself....

I walk around
I flop around
I need more that will be found
more venom, more dynamite, more disaster
I need more than I ever did before
- Iggy Pop

SADUS



This is an pretty old interview with SADUS, questions created by Metalion and David Rossberg. Conducted by Swissman May 27, 2004 in Antioch, California. I don't really know every SADUS album released too well but I know "DTP" is one of the best demos ever and "Illusions" is one intense motherfucker of a Thrash assault album.

Finally I am sitting here with Steve, Darren and Jon from SADUS to talk about the past, the present and the future of SADUS and all the other projects everybody is involved in. This is the first time that all three members of SADUS have done an interview together so sit back and enjoy

What did you guys do prior to SADUS and how did all of you guys meet?

Steve D - Well I give you the short version, me and Jon hooked up, we both were really young and played in cover bands. Darren and our old guitar player were buddies and through friends at school we met, Jon and I were playing in a band at a party these guys came to. It was all in High School

What other bands were you influenced by?

Darren - Well like METALLICA and EXODUS, we kind of wanted to play like SLAYER, faster and more aggressive.

People do compare you guys to old school Repulsion and METALLICA. Do you agree with that?

Darren - I guess. I mean that is what I listened to back then.

You were saying being faster and more aggressive. Were you looking to other bands that were starting to do that like VIO-LENCE and the likes?

Darren - It wasn't VIO-LENCE, it was more like us wanting to be part of the Bay Area scene.

Jon - We were kind of like the opposite of the Bay Area scene, we kind of considered the Bay Area scene back then a little bit trendy. We tried to stand to left of that, kind of a little bit more crass, more hardcore where people were kind of like "What the Fuck?"

Steve D - We were doing our thing before we really knew what the Bay Area scene was. We knew some of the bands but we didn't know them all. I mean Antioch (60 miles/96 kilometers outside of San Francisco) is close enough to be part of the Bay Area scene but far enough out to actually have to make an effort to know what was going on. Specially back then, there were no fliers out here or anything. We were pretty isolated and doing our own thing. I remember when we decided to play fast all the time it was like "Black Magic" by SLAYER and "Fight Fire With Fire" by METALLICA we were like that is the shit right there. We pretty much decided to play fast on our own.

Darren - You know each member of the band wanted to be the best on their instrument. Jon wanted to just go faster and faster on the drums and Steve was moving all over the frets. It seems to just go better fast. (laughs) We would sound better fast so that is why we play fast.

Steve D - Yeah we really didn't buddy up with a lot of these bands. We went did our gigs, the only band we really got along with was AUTOPSY which didn't play fast at all and HEXX who weren't fast at all either. We were like the insane step child of these three bands.

Darren - We weren't even considered Bay Area Thrash unless somebody asked about us or wrote about us. Then they would say SADUS is from the Bay Area. I mean we are one hour away from it.

When you guys recorded the "Death To Posers" (DTP) Demo back in 1986, it was professionally done and looks like it was expensive to make. Did you feel from the beginning this was going to be a good band and worth all the money and effort?

Steve D - You know what is weird, we did the tape in 1986, but we had formed in 1984/1985. A lot of bands rush into their first demo they kind of use their demo as a measuring stick. We already had played tons of kegger parties and little shows and gigs here and there we already knew who we were as a band. We were kind of late coming out with a demo. I think we put a lot into it because we knew we had to come up with something real good. We were ready for an album right after that.

Jon - It wasn't that expensive. We were ready for an album right after that.

Steve D - It kind of was because we didn't have jobs then. We were all volunteered for some kind of medical experiment at the hospital, they gave us money.

You are kidding right?

Steve D - No, my mom worked at the Veterans Hospital. We were research subjects, they would do brain scans.

Darren - They would take our blood and put us in front of a TV, they had like a little light that was flickering.

Steve D - It was kind of like a reaction test for your brain skills. That is awesome.

Darren - We were all stoned before we went in there. (laughing)

Jon - They had to adjust the machines for us. (laughing)

Steve D - We got a couple hundred bucks each for doing that. Jon - So I guess you could say the demo was expensive after all. We all put 60 bucks in.

That is quite a bit of money. Well after that you guys appeared on a compilation LP called "Raging Death". Were there plans of them releasing your album as well?

Darren - No, this was just like a fan who wanted to make an album so he asked us if he could put one of our songs on there and we said sure, no problem.

Instead of going to a established label, Illusions was released on your own label. Did you guys have any offers?

Steve D - Yeah, when we did the "DTP" demo, we were trying to get the band known, we shopped around for labels trying to get a deal. Nothing really was happening. The next year we made a little two song demo, we figured if we maybe played some new songs, they would take that with the first demo and see how we progressed. We did get offers but they were so minuscule compared what we thought we needed to make our album come out the way we wanted. I remember by the time we decided to do our own album, we had a certain amount invested, so half way through, we still were getting offers but they were less than what we already had put in so far. Remember some of the old labels, they weren't so good.

Jon - Back then there weren't so many brutal bands. Nowadays there are so many of them. There was no scene that had really developed yet in that kind of music. There were only a few bands that would get signed to a big deal back then.

Talking about big deals, eventually you guys were picked up by ROADRUNNER. They re-released the first album under a new title. What was the reason behind the new title?

Steve D - Because they fucked up. See here is what happened, we wanted them to sign us, after our second demo and they said we weren't worth it. That and all the other label offers helped us make the decision to put out our own album. Before we put it out, we told them again, hey the album is done, take it and put it out. They said nah, we don't want to take a chance. Once again they passed on us, so we put it out ourselves, and we were persistent, we sold that fucker in the mail everywhere. We were into it back then, we were very busy mailing this shit everywhere. We made a lot of noise as a little band independently like that. They took notice and finally said alright, they have proven that they can sell a decent amount so they finally picked us up. When they signed us and did our second album, they went back and said alright, we are going to take your first album now. They other album title is basically because the cover changed.

Darren - They didn't like the drawing on Illusions.

Steve D - It wasn't ROADRUNNER who changed the title, we already had that title for the cassette version. The vinyl version and the cassette have two different covers so they have two different titles. When they bought the first album, they used the cassette idea and made all the covers like that.

How many labels would you say were interested?

Steve D - For the first album?

Yeah!

Steve D - Just a hand full. There were probably about 3 good ones and 6,7,8 small ones. That we couldn't even take seriously.

Jon - Not enough, we really didn't get what we wanted. Obviously Roadrunner was a pretty good label at one time, right?

Darren - Yes

What do you guys think you guys would be doing if you would have signed with another label than ROADRUNNER?

Jon - Well you say that ROADRUNNER is a good label, I think they have twice as many bands as they should have. They put only a certain amount of time into maybe two or three bands but they might have 200 different bands. I wouldn't say they were a great label, they were a big label.

Steve D - What would we do different? Well I would say absolutely nothing. We always did it the way we wanted. We never had to send ROADRUNNER updates on how the songs were coming along or get anything approved, we always had full control of everything we did. We wrote our songs from the beginning to the end without any outside influences and the art work was always between us and the artist. The first time they heard or saw anything from us was the final thing. If we would have been on a different label, we would have done the same thing.

You guys are critically acclaimed, you have a huge underground following, why do you think you guys never went mainstream?

Darren - Because we were way to brutal.

Steve D - We didn't have in us, we couldn't have gone mainstream even if we wanted to, I don't think. The combination of us writing nobody has that commercial nac.

Darren - As soon as you play something the other guys go like that is fucking gay dude.

Steve D - We really kept each other in check with that.

So you aren't really bitter that you guys didn't make it.

Steve D - No that is really such a long shot.

Jon - We were in it to make music that we liked, we were never trying to please a certain type of crowd.

Steve D - We saw friends of ours that really tried to appease to the scene at the time and if it didn't hit off, they were just miserable doing it. We were thinking if we were not going to hit it off either, we might as well be happy with what we were doing. You know let's do it our way, if it clicks and works out for us, that is even better if not fuck we are going down happy what we are doing. Now you can look at it in retrospect why we would do that because here we are now 20 years later still doing it our way, still having fun and not worried about how many fucking albums we have ever sold or anything.

Darren - That's got to be the worst feeling, selling out and not making any money.

Steve D - Yeah selling out and not selling.

Darren - Trying to please so many people and not being happy anyways.

Steve D - It's such a shot in the dark to hit it either way. We are happy doing it our way.

Darren - We have a couple record man, at least we have them our selves.

Steve D - As long as we got our own copy, we are happy. (starts laughing)

What does SADUS mean to you guys? I mean Steve and Jon you both have played for TESTAMENT, how is this different?

Steve D - Well this is where it all started for us. Like I just said, 20 years we have been doing this together and DEATH or TESTAMENT wouldn't know who the fuck I am if it wasn't for this all here. This is always home base for me. Playing with another band is a fun experience you know, different things, learn different peoples approach to music and everything.

Jon - It is not as gratifying and relaxing you know. It's like a family vacation in a way.

Steve D - It like working for a company just like a regular employee or running your own business. This is a total equal band, we all put our input and it turns out with all our ingredients mixed in. Playing in another band is like playing a cover band, you are playing someone Else's songs. I can influence it to an extent but they already have their thing going. It is a big difference.

Darren you never played for another band like Jon and Steve have. Is there a particular reason for that?

Darren - I have a hard enough time playing in this band. (all of them start laughing)

The first two demos were re released on CD by HAMERHEART a while ago. Were you guys involved in that or was he just doing that for you guys?

Steve D - We were totally involved.

Jon - Which demos were re released? (laughing)

Steve D - Dude that project too me so fucking long. When Chuck Schuldiner signed a deal with him with CONTROL DENIED, the guy was telling him the whole reason why he has a label is because he likes to take bands old demos and put them out on CD. He goes yeah you have Steve here, I would love to put out the SADUS stuff because it is classic. So Chuck goes fuck, call him up here is the number. So the guy calls up and goes hey I am sitting here with Chuck, he gave me your number, I want to put out the SADUS demos what do you say? I give you a bunch of money for it. Sure, it is just sitting on a shelf otherwise.

Show me the money!

Steve D - (laughs) It wasn't all about the money, it helps, I bought a bunch of T-shirts with it. So yeah, we were totally involved. It was totally our decision to do it. We got some new artwork for the cover. And digitized the old analog tapes.

What are your thoughts on them releasing 4 tracks of CONTROL DENIED together with some old DEATH Demos?

Steve D - What is my thought? I think it is complete bullshit! They should have just left it alone. Unfinished material! It's crazy. If you send something to a record company, like a rehearsal tape or a pre-production recording or something, like here is kind of what the new songs are going to be, you trust those people that work there not to let that out. You only want your best to get out, the final album. That guy, Chuck sent him because he was totally cool with the guy some stuff to say check it out, this is what we are doing. I realize there is a problem with the new album coming out. Like we have to trust the family to do it, he has to trust the family that they say we are eventually going to finish it, they got to just wait. They got to sit there and just wait and he couldn't wait anymore and released what he had which is basically a rehearsal recording. It was done in a studio with a bunch of microphones so it sounds good but there is no bass or vocals or anything on it.

You guys are kind of like an underground cult band. Do you still think one of these days we will get the recognition we deserve?

Darren - We can always hope, but you know we always have a good time what we are doing. Hopefully on this next one. You know we always say hopefully someone will get good distribution and have it out there where people can have it if they want to have it instead to everybody just going ah, I can't get your albums man. All I would like is for people to be able to hear it, that would be the best.

Steve you played with AUTOPSY for a while, where you ever a full time member?

Steve D - I met Chris (Reifert) when he was in DEATH, one day they called Darren's phone number, we had put Darren's phone number on our demo tape. They just fucking called us up and said hey we are a band from Concord, come hang out with us so we went alright. Back then you could advertise Keg parties and stuff like that you know.

Darren - If you have an old "DTP" demo, you can call my dad. He still has the same phone number.

Is it on the CD as well?

Steve D - No, but we should have for old times sake. Well I was just kind of giving you some background but I met Chris back in the day when DEATH and SADUS were buddies. So when Chris made his own band, they had no base player. It is basically just as easy as that. I knew the guy, they needed to borrow me real quick. It was really quick. Darren- It was the start of the Steve DiGiorgio being borrowed. Show up with some beer.

Jon - Will play for beer. (laughing)

You knew Chuck from way back then from doing lots of pre-production work on DEATH albums. Why didn't ever join DEATH?

Darren - Well Chuck moved to Florida.

Steve D - Chuck was friends with all of us here, I stayed in touch with him because I jammed with him and stuff. We were talking on a regular basis as friends and all of a sudden if he needed a bass player, then I would come in and do it. It was just because we were buddies. There was really never a question of joining or not. I mean I was a SADUS guy and he knew it, he was one of our biggest fans. I don't think he wanted me to join, he wanted SADUS to get big so he could see us play more. Chuck loved all the SADUS guys man, he never put me in any type of position to make any choice in the matter. If he needed me to play, he always made sure it was cool with everybody. He was always like how are Darren and Jon doing, what about King Luis (SADUS Manager)? Everybody is cool right? It was a good situation, he was good guy.

Do you know how many albums you played on?

King Luis - Real Albums 4. (everybody starts laughing) Well SADUS made 4 albums right?

Steve D - No, I did a lot, it is probably 20 or something. I mean in the past 10 months I was involved with 6 albums. I am pretty much peeking right now.

Who do you think has done more albums? You, or Likker?

Steve D - Likker, oh Danny? Oh man probably him man. How many do you think he played on.

Me? Oh probably 15 - 18.

Steve D - Well I played on about 20 but some are kind of shitty. (laughs)

Which one is your favorite record you played on?

Steve D - The first Demo and the SADUS records but there is really no favorite.

Darren - Yeah when you are a musician, there are no favorites, it changes daily.



Both of you guys (Steve D and Jon) played in TESTAMENT. Did you ever consider SADUS as a side project?

Jon - No, TESTAMENT was the side project. It was a money gig.
Steve D - You know everybody talks about side projects, it was just what we were doing at that time. The whole reason for this tour we just did is because when I go out there and play with these other bands, DEATH does big shows, TESTAMENT does big shows, fucking SADUS fans come out. I used to go out there by myself and I'd tell these guys all these stories oh man, these fans were coming look they signed this stuff for you guys, they want to hear a new album, they want this and that. The other guys were like cool. Don't get me wrong, they were happy hearing it but how do you react. So then I bring Rob to come and check it out. We come back and tell these two guys. We saw it man, there is some crazy fans out there, we better do something. So we brought along Jon too and we played Stockholm. The whole front row was SADUS fans. They wore like 10 - 12 year old SADUS shirts, they had like holes on the bottom. That's what the wore purposely to the TESTAMENT gig to hype the SADUS presence there that night. I said that is it man. We owe these fuckers some SADUS time. So we finally got Darren out there you know. Like I said it started with me and I started bringing everybody. That is all I wanted bring everyone else and let them experience it as well. It wasn't a side project, it was kind of on hold. It was good to go out there with the other bands and see that first hand. I had people throw me shit on stage like messages to bring back to SADUS like we are waiting man. Meeting them after the show, they were like hey man, bring your band over here.
King Luis - There weren't a whole bunch, but the ones that were there, let everybody know who they wanted to show up. There were like 20 out of 2000 sometimes but those 20 people would stay after the show, and beg Steve to bring SADUS to Italy or Greece or wherever.
Steve D - They were doing this shit at the DEATH shows as well, they were like right in front of my at the stage screaming out SADUS song titles in between DEATH songs. I was like all embarrassed looking over to Chuck and he was giving me the thumbs up. I was like cool but like I told you he was a big SADUS fan. He was like hey they paid for a DEATH ticket, what the fuck do I care what they are yelling (laughs). SADUS was never a side project, more something always on the brink of coming back

Do you play any other instruments?

Steve D - A little bit of synthesizer that is about it. I haven't played Trombone or Tuba in 20 years. I haven't played Clarinet for about 20 years. I used to play a lot of instruments when I was younger.

Where do you guys see yourselves in 15 years?

Darren - You are probably looking at it.

Steve D - What issue of the SLAYER MAGAZINE is this?

This is the 20th issue.

Steve D - Well we will be in the 35th issue then. The question will be, when are you guys going to put out your 6th album? (laughing)

Anything else you want to tell the fans?

Darren - You guys rule, Norway was killer.

Steve D - We love our Scandinavian Viking brothers, they keep us hanging in there. Oh yeah and don't get too drunk before the shows.



Are any of you guys staying in touch with Rob? Do you know what he has been up to?

Jon - Negative!

Steve D - Three words Rob 'no' More

How come you started DARK HALL?

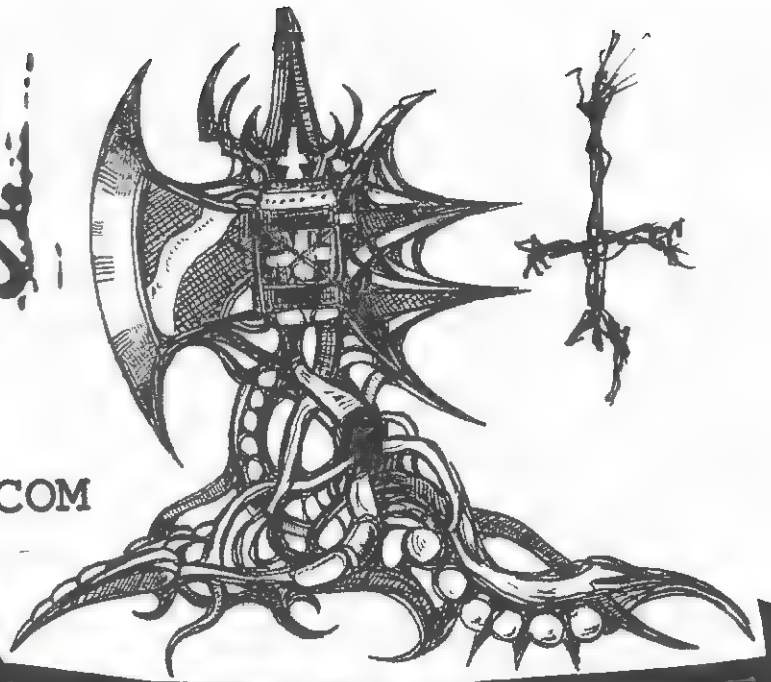
Steve D - The Sax player of DARK HALL and I have been friends since we were kids, since I came to California. We always jammed off and on. It was just a chance to write some crazy fusion tunes I had in my head. I felt like taking a stab at a different style of music after a long time.

Would you ever consider playing in a project where you won't play bass at all?

Steve D - Yes, it is called SADUS. (laughs) Actually no, this is the only thing that I consider myself half way decent at. Might as well keep it there.

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I... I'M SORRY MAN..
I DIDN'T WANT TO DO THAT
IT WAS AN ACCIDENT...

HEY MATE
ARE YOU OK?!
SAY SOMETHING!

DO I NEED TO CALL
THE EMERGENCIES?

ARNE, DUDE!

....KREATOR OF DEMONS AND MONSTERS COMMAND
 RULER OF THE DARKNESS THAT IS HIS KINGDOM
 EQUAL AS THE BLOOD DEATH WILL MAKE IT ALL HIS OWN....



Who was that?

A good friend of mine, he asked whether I want to go on a EDGUY concert tonight?

The Power Metal faggots?

- Haha, yes. I never liked there kind of music, but the guys are okay and they sound a bit like HELLOWEEN in the good old '80ies. (laughs) There are good musicians, but on the other side. If you listen that kind of music too long, I start to get mad.

Back to your band-name. Who came up with the final version? And what is the real meaning of it. In the well-known German "Heavy Metal Encyclopedia" by Matthias Herr KREATOR was translated as "Nordic forest troll". Sounds strange to me. I never found a creature with that name during all the years.

That is a little bit difficult. I know, we had chosen the name KREATOR and I was very proud to hold our first record in my hand. I showed it to my history teacher and he spontaneously said, that KREATOR is Nordic forest troll. At that time I still went to school, I had to take off when we wanted to record "Endless Pain" by the way. I had no doubts, that it would not be the truth what he said. But he said, KREATOR is a creature out of the Edda. A few years later, I read the Edda, but I couldn't find KREATOR in it. That's strange. Did he kid me? Who knows.

When Metalion asked me to do an interview with one of the big German Thrash Heroes - KREATOR, SODOM or DESTRUCTION - I suddenly decided to pick out KREATOR of this unholy trinity. I had the chance to speak with Mille. As the interview is for the SLAYER anniversary edition # 20, the questions are more focused on the very beginning of KREATOR. Mille was very relaxed and friendly. Cool down dear readers, the journey starts. (This is obviously very old but I think it is pretty amusing anyway....ED)

Where the '80ies really better Mille?

- Oh my God, in the '80ies I was a youngster. I didn't keep an eye on the world in the same way like I do it today. Today I'm much more attentive, I have more interests. But with 18. Hmmm, let me say: everybody likes it to be young, and being a young teenager is probably the best time in life at all. I have doubts, that the '80ies were really better. To be honest, everything was pretty similar, but now, 20 years later we like to glorify the old times a bit to much. And if I was a teenager in the '90ies, I would maybe say, the '90ies were the best times. Everybody likes the times, when one is young. But if it comes to music, the '80ies were more difficult. There was only one record store here in Altentessen (the place, where Mille grew up, today a district of the city Gelsenkirchen, situated in the heart of the Ruhr basin, the big industrial area with huge coal and steel industry - Ed.) where it was possible to buy good Metal records. At that time we had no Metal mags here in Germany, it was nearly impossible to get any info's about bands, concerts. Sometimes we bought the Dutch AARDSCHOK MAGAZINE, even if we didn't speak a single word Dutch. A few months later I held the first Metal fanzines in my hands I ever saw and one of them was SLAYER MAG. That was in 1985

When have you heard of SODOM and DESTRUCTION the first time?

- Ohh, a good question. I know it happened in Essen (neighbour-town of Gelsenkirchen - Ed.). In Essen we had two great record stores, one of them was called "Amsterdam". There was a poster in the shopping-window of the store. It was a radio list and SODOM were on number 1 position in America. I thought, oh my god, SODOM? I knew the SODOM tape, but to be honest, I didn't like it. After I saw that poster in the window, I heard the tape again and again to figure out, why this band where number one in America. It was unbelievable. Later Angel Ripper told me, that the whole poster was only a joke, a fake list. SODOM did that poster themselves. And DESTRUCTION. Vektor got a demo of them. We were all big DESTRUCTION fans. We organized a DESTRUCTION show in our youth-club here in Altentessen. But at that time our name was still TORMENTOR.

When did you feel, the time has come for changing the band-name?

- There wasn't a single reason, if you mean this. More a combination of different causes. First, there was a band from Hamburg. Their name was TORMENT. Those guys were really dickheads, although we didn't have the identical same name, they told us, they would us not allow to go in stage as TORMENTOR. Today I could laugh about this, but think, when we started, we were 15/16 in age, the TORMENT guys much older we were a little shy and thought, it would be better, to accept what they said. And second, there was really another band with the name TORMENTOR, but they played AOR. And some friends told me again and again from another band here and there with that name. To make it short: TORMENTOR was totally unoriginal and total cliché. Did you know, that we had in our first logo a pentagram and named our style Fuckin Black Metal? Later then we signed the contract with NOISE RECORDS and we told them, that we have heard about another band with the name TORMENTOR. NOISE told us, that they never like the name TORMENTOR. So both, we and the label, felt, it would be the most clever thing, to have another name before we put out our first album. I have to disappoint on this place all TORMENTOR maniacs here. TORMENTOR was never a real band like KREATOR. We recorded just two demos, rehearsed not very often. It was just the last name we had before everything went more serious. But we had almost 10 other names before we named us TORMENTOR. (Mille's mobile rings. blablablablabla)

Let's come to your Finnish "newcomer" in the Teutonic horde. Do you have a special connection to Finland, since Sami is in the band?

- Then I have to ask, what is a typical Finn? If every Finn is like Sami, then I would like them really a lot. But to be honest, beside the few shows we play in Finland I cannot say that much about Finland and the Finns. I can tell you a lot about Sami. I mentioned it very often and I will do that again and again. He is a real genius on guitar. He re-values KREATOR a lot. It is always pure magic, when he joins the band in the song-writing process. We rehearse most of the time just as a trio, put the songs together. But I always look forward, when Sami joins us and we play with the complete line-up in the rehearsal room. I'm always very curious to hear his opinion about the new songs. And his ideas are brilliant. He is like bonus.

And how turned the shows in Finland out, since KREATOR nowadays is a 4th Finnish band?

- I have the feeling, that the Finnish press is a bit more interested, since Sami plays in KREATOR. Sami is very popular in Finland due to his participation in WALTARI and of course many Finns are very grateful, that Sami now plays in, how they say, a German Thrash legend.

Have you ever speculated, how long KREATOR will exist in the next years?

- I don't like to speculate about this. I have no time schedule for the next years, if you mean this. I look in the future maybe some months, not years. The most important question is: can I hold the level of the songs, can I put enough brutality in the songs, are there enough ideas in my head to make a real killer. As long as I can answer this with "yes" KREATOR will exist.

Don't you think, people get less aggressive when the getting old?

- No. (laughs). The opposite is the truth. If I listen to our new stuff, sometimes I cannot believe, how brutal and heavy the songs sound. Brutality comes always along with the ability to play exact on the point. Our technical skills some years ago were not that good like today. I know, some Die Hard fans were a bit confused about our experimental phase with "Renewal" and "Endorama". But we had to do it. We felt, we have to change the sound. And after this time of experimentation we wanted to go back to our roots. For me, the whole process was very natural. But I can assure you, that you will not hear any experiments on the new album. It will probably be the most in your face KREATOR record you've ever experienced.

Apropos experience. Have you ever had a terrible adventure in an airplane?

- You mean, if we had nearly a crash or something like that? I'm lucky I can say, so far everything turned out very good. I know some stories from other bands, who had strong turbulence and feared to die. That stories sound pretty cool afterwards, but to be honest, I never want to be in that situation. If we go to south-America, we know that over the Andes are always some minutes, where the machine gets shaken really strong. But that's normal, so in that case its okay

"I PUKED LIKE HELL"

Mille, tell me about a cover-artwork, that comes you suddenly in mind?

- The debut cover of the WILD DOGS. And there was another cool cover, just a volcano on front. The band was names HAWAII. Not to forget "Fire in The Brain" from Oz. A skull in hand with fire, perfect! I have to admit I bought a lot of records only because of the cover. For instance W.A.S.P. I thought, wow so much blood, they must be brutal. But they sucked like hell.

Have you had a concept for the artwork of "Endless Pain"?

- A concept? That was a good one. Think! We were just 16. We had absolutely no concept in anything. After we had recorded the songs for "Endless Pain" we went into the NOISE RECORDS bureau. They had already instructed a cover artist for us. That was not so difficult. As we stayed in the bureau the time before, we saw the cover of CELTIC FROST's "Morbld Tales" hanging on the wall. We told our label manager, that we like the design and the style of this artist. Lawvere was from Spain and as we saw the artwork for "Endless Pain" we liked it immediately. I was like a puzzle, what was put together. I thought, okay, now we release this vinyl and that's it. We had absolutely no expectations. Nobody could imagine to record another album after "Endless Pain".

You once said, your first record was ever was from the BEE GEES.

- Okay, that's true. But please forgive me, at that time I had no clue, how real music should sound, haha.

What can you tell me about your first guitar?

- The husband of my cousin had an old Wertheim model. This was a kind of a cheap Fender Stratocaster look-alike, but real crap. And furthermore he had an old Echolett amplifier and cabinet. The perfect equipment for lousy dance-music. It was impossible to tune this axe, but at the very beginning of my musical career I thought, it was my fault. I bought the whole set guitar, amp and cabinet for 100 German Marks. Later then I bought a Les Paul copy in a good guitar-shop in Essen. By the way, the mentioned husband of my cousin was also the guy, who brought us to the studio in Berlin by car. As we were just 16 we had no driving licence. (that means, they had to drive through the communistic eastern part of Germany on a special "Transit Autobahn" to (West)Berlin - ed.)

If you compare your feelings when you stare from the stage to the audience now and 15-20 years earlier, what has changed for you?

- There hasn't changed too much. I always tried and try to give 150% when I go on stage and I like to communicate with people. But I have to admit, even if we play a real big show with 5.000 visitors and in the first row I see anyone, who looks pretty bored, that really pisses me on.

Do you like to visit concerts for your personal?

- I love it. But sometimes it is hard, cause some kind of fans cannot accept, that there is a difference between the KREATOR front man Mille and Mille private. I like small-talks, if people ask me something about the new record for instance. But there are always some fans, who think, that I'm their private property. They are the whole night on my side, babble and babble and babble and the best to get out of this situation would be getting invisible.

Let's come to the "Extreme Aggression". Many were totally confused to find a band-picture as cover. Was it hard to choose that picture?

- Haha, it was not hard for us to choose it, because our label did it. It was a bad situation. The album has been already recorded and everyone waited for the cover. But when the cover came in, everyone felt - oooooohhh, that looks really like shit. To be honest, it was real crap. A guy was standing in front of a mirror and out of his head crawled the well-know KREATOR demon. To bad, the whole idea was mine, I had picked out the painter some months ago. I really had a bad conscience. The problem was, we wanted to release the album as fast as possible. We had a new and very good deal with Epic in the states and nobody wanted to wait. So our label decided to put this photo on the front-cover. According to the circumstances we felt, this picture was a good compromise.

Can you remember your first show outside of Germany?

- Very good. There are two shows worth to mention. The first KREATOR show abroad ever took place in Belgium. The organizer was METALLYSEE. They booked us one a festival together with SATAN and we played as headliner. I thought, oh damn, just after one album we play headliner after SATAN. SATAN was a total cult band for us, all liked them really a lot. The second show abroad took place in Copenhagen, Denmark. I can't remember the name of the guy who did it. He had a fanzine running. The name was DARK hmmm THORNE or something like that. But I remember, we drove all together in our little car to this show. This turned out very adventurous. (BLACKTHORN MAGAZINE - ED)

Have you ever felt, that band grows too fast?

- No, never. We tried everything, we did not think too long, if there was an option or an offer. We just did it. We had a lot of parties, a lot of drugs. But we never had a real drug problem. Okay, the alcohol consume was really immense. Our old bass-player Rob left the band due to the alcohol. He couldn't handle to have all night so many alcohol for free. But to come back to your question, I felt, directly after "Extreme Aggression" many things happened in the band. We had so many tours in America and Europe. This was a time, when everybody felt, that the band grows just in that moment. It was a great feeling.

What are you reading at the moment?

- A punk rock biography. I like to read a lot. My girl-friend is studying German language and literature studies and Anglistics, so we have always a lot of great books at home.

If I ask you, which band comes you suddenly in mind, that you share the stages with, what is your answer?

- My answer is VOIVOD. We toured with them one time in America and one time in Europe. We learned so much from them. They were real do-it-yourself Rock 'n Roller. We had no clue about anything at the beginning of our career. Before we did our first tour in America with VOIVOD, we only had this tour with DESTRUCTION and RAGE here in Europe. This tour was really easy. We had a full crew, we just had to go on stage, that's it. Not carrying stuff, no load-in, building the stage. We thought, it is normal to have that comfort on a tour. Then we came to America and there everything turned out totally different. VOIVOD had no crew, so they built they stage, the did the load-in. Nobody told us to help them, so after a few days VOIVOD got really pissed about us. I remember many talks after that, where they explained, how the "real business" works. That it's the best, to hold as much as possible in the own hands. Otherwise its impossible to control anything.

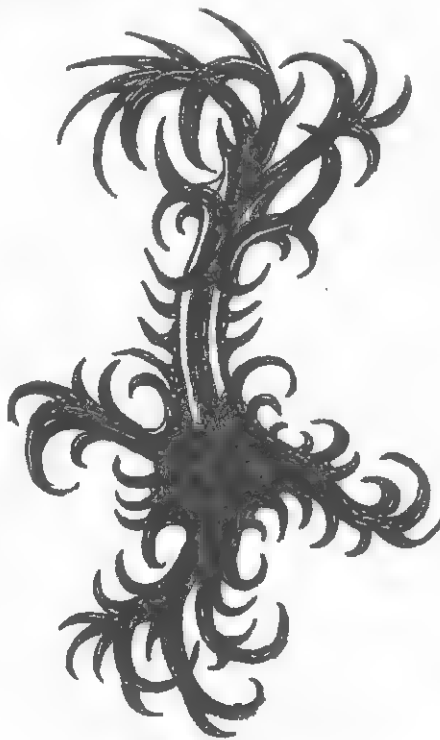
KREATOR was the first big Thrash band, that played suddenly after the breakdown of the wall in East Germany a show in the former G.D.R. Can you remember this evening in East-Berlin?

- I have to disappoint you. I had a strange time during that historical days. There where so many other things in my head, at that time, the end of the wall was for me only a little notice in my head. Okay, the show was really good, but after the show, I ate a few magic mushrooms and had to spend many hours on toilet. I puked like hell.

What is your special message to the SLAYER MAGAZINE anniversary, Mille?

- Greetings to Metallon and thanks for his support over all the years. SLAYER always was competent and independent. SLAYER- that's the truth. SLAYER never tucked in any ones ass. Congratulations.

Volkmar Weber



SAVAGE THRUST



There is always interesting bands to track down, and while some of them might not had the biggest impact on the Metal scene I still think it is a piece of our Metal history to learn about those lesser known bands that fought endless battles for the sake of Metal. Another band like that is SAVAGE THRUST from Staten Island in New York. A band that had much higher potential I think. Here is a little interview with them. (Thanks to Mike Hannon for the hook up)

First of all, I know this is a weird way to start an interview, but whenever I do a search for information on SAVAGE THRUST on the Internet there are millions of hits on porn related links. I guess that also was your intention when named the band, right?

- ...Yes, think about it, a 'savage thrust' could come from either a knife or a penis!

What was the happiest SAVAGE THRUST related memory you treasure the most now? (I'm speaking of the band now!)

- Aside from the girls and fans, it has to be live gigs, a toss up between playing with MANOWAR and the trip to Mexico.

Tell us how the band got together in the first place: I guess you all were in bands previously to SAVAGE THRUST?

- Pat Donofrio and I started the band with Mike Smith, we went through some different drummers and bass players before settling on Bobby Bock and Jimmy Gallentine for the first original line-up of the band (which we recorded the first demo with), although we had all played in local 'cover' type bands before SAVAGE THRUST, none are worth mentioning...

When you got together did you already have the musical style sorted out or did you work that out as the band grew?

- Not really, it kind of grew out of each of our different influences. I was into METALLICA, ANTI-RAX and SLAYER, Bobby was into Jazz/Rock, Pat worshiped JUDAS PRIEST, Jimmy was an AEROSMITH fanatic and Mike liked just about everything.

I remember the band was heavily self-promoted in the Metal underground back then, mainly with the "Demo Of Doom" release. But think especially in these days underground people were slightly narrower minded. I was wondering if SAVAGE THRUST ever felt ignored because of your high-pitched vocals?

- Most definitely. Early on, we were turned down by a couple of European labels because they did not like the vocals. We stuck by our singer, and it turned out that it was probably worse for us in retrospect. By the time we finally did get a new vocalist, the scene had dried up. I look back on it now as not too big of a loss, the bands we opened for (and secretly wished we could be at the same level of) are all now broken up and long departed. A few survive, making a small income from infrequent gigs.

Was there a group of bands you felt SAVAGE THRUST was close to? Like NASTY SAVAGE or BLESSED DEATH for instance?

Yes, BLESSED DEATH, WHIPLASH, OVERKILL, PRIMAL SCREAM, NUCLEAR ASSAULT and FAITH OR FEAR come to mind immediately. They were all very cool to hang out with as well as play with.

What bands in New York were you close to? And what bands did you play live with?

- In addition to the above-mentioned NY-NJ bands, we cannot forget ANVIL BITCH. We would go there to Philadelphia and play with them. They would come up here to play with us. We fed off each other's following. Another band I remember locally was INSANIC from New Jersey, very cool dudes whom we met hanging 'round Rock and Roll Heaven (the Johnny Z. /MEGAFORCE record store in NJ) back in the mid-eighties. I wonder what ever happened to those dudes?

Were SAVAGE THRUST considered a good live band? Did you like to be on the stage?

- We loved it and played out more than any other original band from Staten Island. We would play everywhere within driving distance that would have us, but the best gigs were at MANOUR in Brooklyn. We were the 'house Thrash band' whom they called on when a new national band played and needed an opening act. Besides the store-mentioned bands, some other bands we played with were MANOWAR, ANTI-RAX, EXODUS, VOIVOD, WHITE ZOMBIE, RAMONES, ARMORED SAINT and many others.

I know you did a "7" once too, I can't really remember when but it was previous to the LP I think? How come you decided to do that? And was this releases funded by yourself?

- No, it was put out and funded by a guy in NJ whom was starting his own record label, the single is very rare and hard to find today. And yes, it was before the LP by a couple of years.

How did the appearance on SPEED METAL HELL 3 occur? You are featured there with a non-LP track "Crown Of Thorns". Was that taken from a demo or specially recorded for this compilation only?

- No, they just used the track from the "Demo of Doom" tape (which we self-sold over 3500 copies of!) Actually, I remember getting a small royalty check from NEW RENAISSANCE RECORDS once! By the way, it was SPEED METAL HELL 2. The album also featured the first appearance of Jason Newsted!

Your debut LP was released in 1990 by a Mexican label called AVANZADA METALLICA or something, maybe a strange move? How come you ended up on that somehow obscure label?

- George Lazarov had a Metal label and magazine in Mexico City. They brought us down to do some gigs in 1988. We went over great. I remember the first day off the plane we were set to do an in-store autograph signing. We pulled up to the record store and the line was around the block! We also did a radio interview, appeared on their live television news show (Univision I believe) did three live shows, and two other appearances. After that, they put out our album on their label. I don't think more than 5-7000 were ever pressed. It's also rare and sold on eBay for a whopping \$27.00 recently!

Looking back on the musical aspect of your debut LP do you feel it turned out the way you wanted? Is there anything you are not happy with?

- I just wish we had more money for studio time, all things considered, I think it came out OK.

So how was it to work with that label then? Was there a communication problem due to them being in Mexico?

- I am not sure they ever got a U.S. distribution deal for the label. We were just grateful somebody put it out! We were offered a shitty deal from COMBAT RECORDS, but decided against it. They wanted everything short of your soul and first-born!

You remember what kind of feedback the LP got then?

- Honestly, no, I don't remember many reviews; by the time it came out we had changed the line-up and eventually the singer.

Around the early '90ies a lot were happening on the musical map, did you feel that the climate were changing too and there was less interest for your kind of Metal?

- Yes, the gigs were getting worse, the scene sort of dried up after the advent of NIRVANA and PEARL JAM I think. I think it was also a case of too many bands doing the same style and cutting the pie into too many pieces. Every major/minor Metal label already had their 'baby METALLICA' band, each label signed 6 or more of these groups and of course, did poor sales.



I don't know what happened but even after your LP you recorded a new demo. Why did you do that? Was it to obtain a new deal or what? What happened with this release?

- It was to try to get a US deal with the new line-up (featuring Rob Antila on guitar/vocals) and songs. I thought it was some of our best material, but alas, it was too late by 1990-91 for the type of music we were creating.

For someone that never heard your band, how would you describe your sound?

- Sort of like a Power/Thrash Metal with brains and skills behind it.

What do you think was the strength of SAVAGE THRUST as a band?

- I think it was our ability to come up with heavy riffs and our ability to play them.

So how did SAVAGE THRUST die? What happened?

- I remember the last straw; we lugged all our gear to Manhattan for a gig with three other bands. We went out of our way to promote it and bring people to the club. They would give us 2 bucks a head for passes turned in at the door. At the end of the night I asked the owner 'how many did we bring in?' he told me 23 people. I said to myself, well at least we got gas money, 46 dollars is better than nothing, right. So when I asked for the money and the owner told me: 'sorry, 25 minimum to get paid, it was all downhill from there.

What did you do after the split? Did you join any other bands?

- No, I went back to my first love and created 'Industrial TELEVISION', an underground-film oriented cable TV program, as well as producing music videos and commercials for local bands.

I heard you did a one off re-union at L'AMOURS in 2000. How come?

Was there ever in your mind to continue the band after that?

- The rest of the guys wanted to do it. I was unable to play, having no 'chops' or guitar calluses anymore. I told them: 'I would have to practice 20-30 hours a week for at least five weeks just to be able to attend a rehearsal! No it was just a 'one-off' gig.

Do you think the band had a lot more potential than you proved in your existence?

- Most definitely. I feel we never got the chance to promote ourselves properly. If perhaps we had a bigger label behind us, who knows? But as I said before, where are any of those 'successful' bands I mentioned today? How do you view the years in SAVAGE THRUST now?

- With fondness, although the seven years do seem a bit of a blur to me now. Although the crowds were always wild and fun...I do recall that getting up on stage and hearing your guitar come blasting out of a huge PA system and hear it echoing off the back wall is a very cool feeling that's instantly addictive. I shall always cherish...and never forget those moments.

So would you consider a re-release of this somewhat underground classic album on CD? Who owns the right to this recording now?

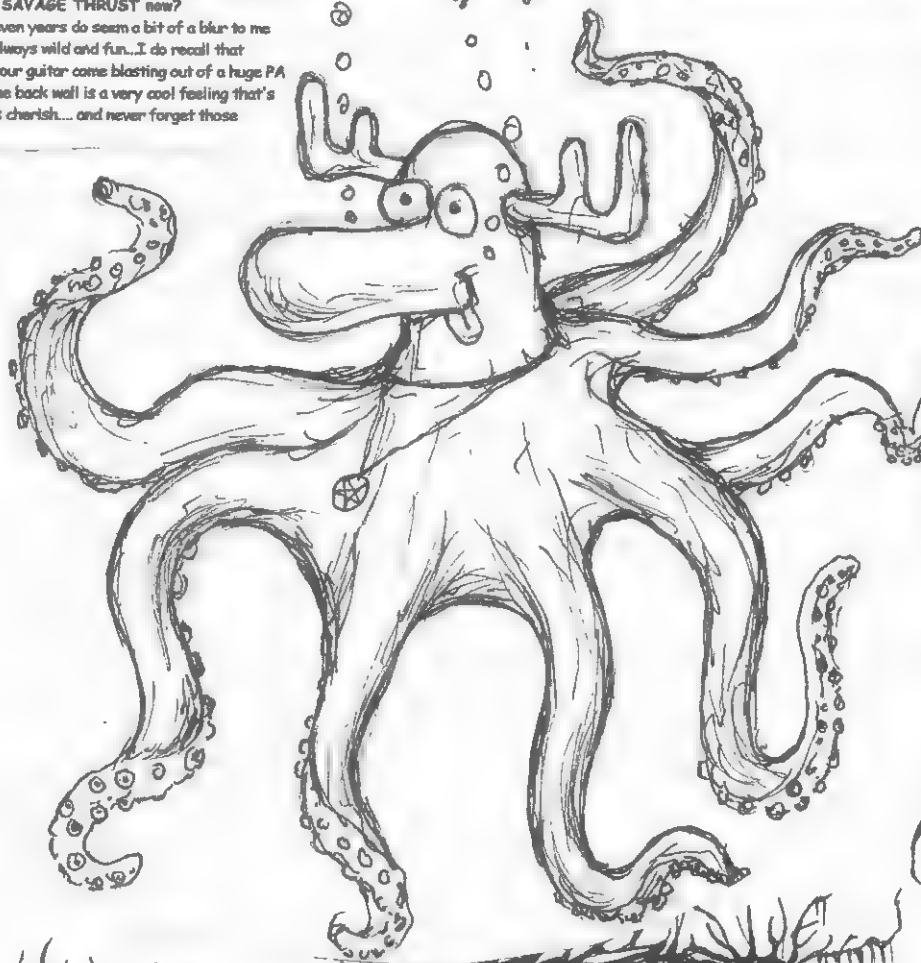
- No never released on CD. I do own the rights, but the only way I think someone would put it out would be for me to do it! I cannot see any label investing in a re-release.

Do you keep in touch with the other guys, and do you know what they are up to now?

- Mike Puch (the last bassist) is now in a band called RIMJAW. Bobby Boch does not play out anymore, but teaches his son how to play. Neither do any of the other members play out, as far as I know.

Thank you for doing this I appreciate that, and treasure the memorial!

- My pleasure.



KILLING FOR RE-CREATION!

By Mike "Artie O." Hannon
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MEDIEVAL - The name can conjure up some morose images in the human mind. Bats blood and crosses. Yikes! Broads, swords and mythical, mystical beasts. Oh, my! The wine, the wenches (and the wheels)! Fair enough, sir. All standard images and thinking (or lack thereof), for many other bands. But, this here isn't just any other band! This is Kalamazoo, Michigan's mighty MEDIEVAL. Simply put - One of a kind, with a mind and style of their own. Projecting the outward look of a rockabilly rebel gang (Gene Vincent would be proud!) and playing an independent style, often termed...Sludge Metal. Always standing apart from the crowd, in just their appearance alone the band then further distinguishes itself with a completely unique sound. To stand alone - To be different. This is the nature of TRUE rebellion! A diverse mix of classic punk rock and heavy Metal, the band presents itself with a MOTORHEAD and DEAD BOYS mindset, mixed into a HOLOCAUST (the band) curry. Along with those said groups MEDIEVAL has been a constant blend in my musical stew over the last 20 years. Despite all of the music references I've just made, be advised (again) that MEDIEVAL deftly integrates all of those influences into a concise, cogent sound that is distinctly theirs and theirs alone! Featured in Kick-Ass magazine, on a regular basis, trailblazing publisher Bob Muldowney continually sung their praises through the years. Much of the frustration of the overly contrived and trendy '80s scene(s) was perfectly captured in many of Bob's lengthy rants, (barely) contained within those same pages. A tireless supporter of the band, Bob spread the word to all who would listen. Myself included! (His wasn't some paid opinion, his was a tireless passion!) Other than an ill-fated tenure with NEW RENAISSANCE RECORDS during the 1980ies, little else has been heard from the MEDIEVAL camp in years. While they certainly still have their many fans, this band simply did not get the recognition they absolutely deserved. Their message is as simple as their name - BE REAL! An amazing concept in these times of relentless posing, scary monsters and super creeps. Many of today's trends are simply magnifications of ridiculous excesses from LONG ago! Out to correct these problems for a new generation, are original band maestros Timmy and Willjous Amsbust. With a great new song already in the bag, appropriately titled "Old School" and a slew of others in the process of completion, I caught up with Timmy for a reunion and much needed update.

Be forewarned and take heed.

Let's begin with a brief history lesson of MEDIEVAL, so we can then fast forward to the beginning of a new chapter in their history... Timmy and Willjous Amsbust have been playing music together a long time. Both playing drums in elementary school, it was quickly decided that Timmy would be switching to guitar so more than an incessant pounding of drums emanated out of their basement (a situation that their parents would truly appreciate). Reflecting upon their choice of material during this era would make one wonder exactly how our comrades became involved in heavy music at all! With an initial song list straight out of a 1950s sock hop, the melodic structure of that particular style would later prove to be one of their most influential attributes when writing their own music. The end of that early rockabilly era was consummated by Timmy's purchase of the DEAD BOYS' album "Young, Loud, and Snotty". - "I had a few pretty cool albums back then, like ANGEL's "Helikva Band", JUDAS PRIEST's "Stained Class", etc., but until I heard the raw energy and life that breathed in the grooves of the DEAD BOYS' album, I had no intention of expanding my guitar playing. After I listened to that album for the first time, I knew what kind of music I really liked."

The next few years were spent exploring the punk scene, and combining these attitudes with a diverse background of rockabilly and hard rock, evident on some of the first songs ever written by Timmy, one of which showed up later on MEDIEVAL's first demo, "Clean Record (don't got no)," a clamoring number with a blues swing and attitude throughout. The addition of bassist Magloo in the early '80ies, allowed the band to play live, and gave additional influence to the evolving set list of cover tunes and original music. According to Timmy, - "Magloo was an old school rocker, with roots in bands we didn't really listen to. We met him when he moved down state with his family. From a standpoint of creativity, it was an exciting time for the band, since we hadn't really latched onto any one form of music. We just liked playing loud and fast, and tried to keep the energy up. We had rock songs, early Metal songs, punk and even new wave sounding shit we played - even a few proverbial ballads. Now that's scary!"

Magloo's ousting came about from a show that was to help propel the band into a new direction.

- "We had this festival show we were playing with 10 or 12 other bands and 100 megs. We were supposed to play this show. There were going to be a ton of people there, and this was going to be the first time we had exposure of this kind. Gino decided to get ill the day of the show. Nervousness related. Willjous and I went to his house, tossed his old man aside and threw Gino and his shit in the car and took off. He looked like hell during the show, and probably sounded like it too, but we didn't care. He wasn't as sick as he made out - we wanted to play, and piking on the stage at that point would have been better for our reputation anyway! The dude held out on us, and that is unacceptable."

So after that memorable gig, the search was on for a replacement. As fate would have it, the stars aligned for a historic meeting and in steps Elwood Chess.

- "Elwood was a year ahead of me, so Willjous knew who he was much more than I did. Elwood saw us play a school homecoming party, or some such nonsense, and really liked what he had seen. So when the opportunity came up to try out for the band, he jumped at it. Now I had just met Lord Byron (the band's former manager) in the previous year, and he introduced me to MOTORHEAD, who became my favorite band immediately. When Elwood arrived, he opened his guitar case and had a Rick (bass) just like Lemmy's, and when I saw that, I knew we were going to be talking the same language! And I was right. We had a 90 minute cassette with every song we had ever played on it, recorded of course in our garage, and every time I saw Elwood for the next 6 months, he had his walkman on with that tape playing. He was hardcore and relentless - definitely a 'Type A' personality - he fit perfectly!"

MEDIEVAL soon found themselves playing the party circuit, trying to earn enough money for some studio time.

- "The plan was for everyone to finish high school before we set out on our paths as musicians. Unfortunately, I was the one who was a grade behind. Elwood and Willjous stayed in the area after they graduated as long as they could to wait for me to finish high school, but the pressure for Elwood from his family to begin his college career was intense. So he went off to school during the spring semester of 1983, a month before we started recording the first real demo, the "MEDIEVAL Cassette Album," during January and February of 1983. So I played the bass parts on the demo."

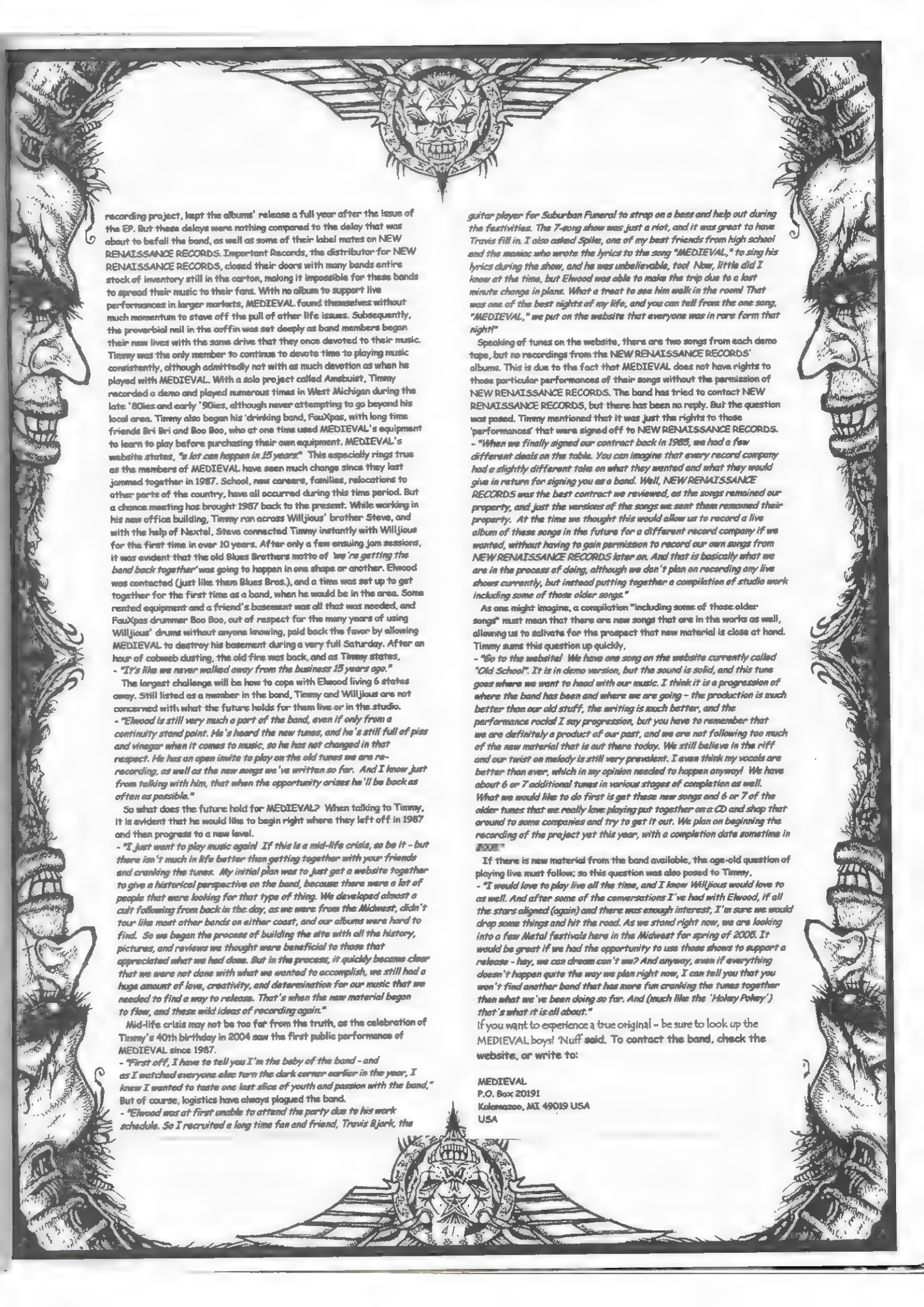
Other personnel changes took place during this recording as well, as Bobby K. the band's original manager dropped out, and Lord Byron took over the reigns of managing the band. Lord Byron, a collector and connoisseur of music, understood that contacts and getting the band promoted were what was needed to expand their audience.

- "Lord Byron brought so many great ideas to the table - we wouldn't be anywhere without his help."

He began to send out promotional packages to the new resurgence of underground fanzines, and the reaction was paramount. The first 'zine to break MEDIEVAL in print was Kick-Ass magazine, with a review by Bob Muldowney penning the term "sludge" Metal for the first time. Sales of the recently completed "MEDIEVAL Cassette Album" were then on their way to new fans all over the world. Elwood's contributions over the summer break of 1983 (when Timmy was finally out of school) helped solidify the direction of band. The first demo had contained songs from the inception of the band through the time of the recording, which included some material that was not as consistent with the remaining songs on the tape. Timmy has since reflected that although not all of the material was in the same vein through and through, it reflected the band as a whole.

- "I like to say that our first demo had a bunch of individual songs that had individual influences that were very apparent. You had rock songs, heavy Metal songs, the beginning of what one might call sludge Metal songs, etc. And I think when you combine that entire project as one event, you can grasp what MEDIEVAL was all about - but you couldn't look at an individual piece to do that, you had to look at the entire project. When Elwood came back from school, and we started writing new songs, I think we took this 'total band influence' concept and applied it to each song we wrote. So you, in essence, had some rock, Heavy Metal, and sludge Metal, etc. flowing through each tune we wrote. And I think that is why the second demo: the "All Knobs to the Right" demo is so solid."

As MEDIEVAL's second demo reached the public, it was apparent that the band was on an upward swing. Individual songs from each demo were soon signed on to compilation albums, including NEW RENAISSANCE RECORDS' "Speed Metal Hell" series and METAL BLADE RECORDS' "Metal Massacre" series, as well as a few European compilation albums. As additional press circulated on the band, and the demos continued to sell well, the prevailing independent record companies at the time began to woo the band. NEW RENAISSANCE RECORDS eventually won them over with the most flexible contract offer, and MEDIEVAL quickly put in the can their 5 song EP. With great reviews following, the band began work on their full-length album "MEDIEVAL KILL! Work on the full-length album was slow at best. Again plagued by school schedules, in the middle of the



recording project, kept the albums' release a full year after the issue of the EP. But these delays were nothing compared to the delay that was about to befall the band, as well as some of their label mates on NEW RENAISSANCE RECORDS. Important Records, the distributor for NEW RENAISSANCE RECORDS, closed their doors with many bands entire stock of inventory still in the carton, making it impossible for these bands to spread their music to their fans. With no album to support live performances in larger markets, MEDIEVAL found themselves without much momentum to stave off the pull of other life issues. Subsequently, the proverbial nail in the coffin was set deeply as band members began their new lives with the same drive that they once devoted to their music. Timmy was the only member to continue to devote time to playing music consistently, although admittedly not with as much devotion as when he played with MEDIEVAL. With a solo project called Ambust, Timmy recorded a demo and played numerous times in West Michigan during the late '80ies and early '90ies, although never attempting to go beyond his local area. Timmy also began his 'drinking band, FauXpas, with long time friends Bri Bri and Boo Boo, who at one time used MEDIEVAL's equipment to learn to play before purchasing their own equipment. MEDIEVAL's website states, "a lot can happen in 15 years." This especially rings true as the members of MEDIEVAL have seen much change since they last jammed together in 1987. School, new careers, families, relocations to other parts of the country, have all occurred during this time period. But a chance meeting has brought 1987 back to the present. While working in his new office building, Timmy ran across Willjious' brother Steve, and with the help of Nextel, Steve connected Timmy instantly with Willjious for the first time in over 10 years. After only a few ensuing jam sessions, it was evident that the old Blues Brothers motto of 'we're getting the band back together' was going to happen in one shape or another. Elwood was contacted (just like them Blues Bros.), and a time was set up to get together for the first time as a band, when he would be in the area. Some rented equipment and a friend's basement was all that was needed, and FauXpas drummer Boo Boo, out of respect for the many years of using Willjious' drums without anyone knowing, paid back the favor by allowing MEDIEVAL to destroy his basement during a very full Saturday. After an hour of cobweb dusting, the old fire was back, and as Timmy states, - "It's like we never walked away from the business 15 years ago."

The largest challenge will be how to cope with Elwood living 6 states away. Still listed as a member in the band, Timmy and Willjious are not concerned with what the future holds for them live or in the studio. - "Elwood is still very much a part of the band, even if only from a continuity stand point. He's heard the new tunes, and he's still full of piss and vinegar when it comes to music, so he has not changed in that respect. He has an open invite to play on the old tunes we are re-recording, as well as the new songs we've written so far. And I know just from talking with him, that when the opportunity arises he'll be back as often as possible."

So what does the future hold for MEDIEVAL? When talking to Timmy, it is evident that he would like to begin right where they left off in 1987 and then progress to a new level.

- "I just want to play music again! If this is a mid-life crisis, so be it - but there isn't much in life better than getting together with your friends and cranking the tunes. My initial plan was to just get a website together to give a historical perspective on the band, because there were a lot of people that were looking for that type of thing. We developed almost a cult following from back in the day, as we were from the Midwest, didn't tour like most other bands on either coast, and our albums were hard to find. So we began the process of building the site with all the history, pictures, and reviews we thought were beneficial to those that appreciated what we had done. But in the process, it quickly became clear that we were not done with what we wanted to accomplish, we still had a huge amount of love, creativity, and determination for our music that we needed to find a way to release. That's when the new material began to flow, and these wild ideas of recording again."

Mid-life crisis may not be too far from the truth, as the celebration of Timmy's 40th birthday in 2004 saw the first public performance of MEDIEVAL since 1987.

- "First off, I have to tell you I'm the baby of the band - and as I watched everyone else turn the dark corner earlier in the year, I knew I wanted to taste one last slice of youth and passion with the band." But of course, logistics have always plagued the band.

- "Elwood was at first unable to attend the party due to his work schedule. So I recruited a long time fan and friend, Travis Bjork, the

guitar player for Suburban Funeral to strap on a bass and help out during the festivities. The 7-song show was just a riot, and it was great to have Travis fill in. I also asked Spikes, one of my best friends from high school and the maniac who wrote the lyrics to the song "MEDIEVAL," to sing his lyrics during the show, and he was unbelievable, too! Now, little did I know at the time, but Elwood was able to make the trip due to a last minute change in plans. What a treat to see him walk in the room! That was one of the best nights of my life, and you can tell from the one song, "MEDIEVAL," we put on the website that everyone was in rare form that night!"

Speaking of tunes on the website, there are two songs from each demo tape, but no recordings from the NEW RENAISSANCE RECORDS' albums. This is due to the fact that MEDIEVAL does not have rights to those particular performances of their songs without the permission of NEW RENAISSANCE RECORDS. The band has tried to contact NEW RENAISSANCE RECORDS, but there has been no reply. But the question was posed. Timmy mentioned that it was just the rights to those 'performances' that were signed off to NEW RENAISSANCE RECORDS. - "When we finally signed our contract back in 1988, we had a few different deals on the table. You can imagine that every record company had a slightly different take on what they wanted and what they would give in return for signing you as a band. Well, NEW RENAISSANCE RECORDS was the best contract we reviewed, as the songs remained our property, and just the versions of the songs we sent them remained their property. At the time we thought this would allow us to record a live album of these songs in the future for a different record company if we wanted, without having to gain permission to record our own songs from NEW RENAISSANCE RECORDS later on. And that is basically what we are in the process of doing, although we don't plan on recording any live shows currently, but instead putting together a compilation of studio work including some of those older songs."

As one might imagine, a compilation "including some of those older songs" must mean that there are new songs that are in the works as well, allowing us to salivate for the prospect that new material is close at hand. Timmy sums this question up quickly,

- "Go to the website! We have one song on the website currently called 'Old School'. It is in demo version, but the sound is solid, and this tune goes where we want to head with our music. I think it is a progression of where the band has been and where we are going - the production is much better than our old stuff, the writing is much better, and the performance rocks! I say progression, but you have to remember that we are definitely a product of our past, and we are not following too much of the new material that is out there today. We still believe in the riff and our twist on melody is still very prevalent. I even think my vocals are better than ever, which in my opinion needed to happen anyway! We have about 6 or 7 additional tunes in various stages of completion as well. What we would like to do first is get these new songs and 6 or 7 of the older tunes that we really love playing put together on a CD and shop that around to some companies and try to get it out. We plan on beginning the recording of the project yet this year, with a completion date sometime in 2006."

If there is new material from the band available, the age-old question of playing live must follow; so this question was also posed to Timmy,

- "I would love to play live all the time, and I know Willjious would love to as well. And after some of the conversations I've had with Elwood, if all the stars aligned (again) and there was enough interest, I'm sure we would drop some things and hit the road. As we stand right now, we are looking into a few Metal festivals here in the Midwest for spring of 2006. It would be great if we had the opportunity to use those shows to support a release - hey, we can dream can't we? And anyway, even if everything doesn't happen quite the way we plan right now, I can tell you that you won't find another band that has more fun cranking the tunes together than what we've been doing so far. And (much like the 'Hokey Pokey') that's what it is all about."

If you want to experience a true original - be sure to look up the MEDIEVAL boys! 'Nuff said. To contact the band, check the website, or write to:

MEDIEVAL
P.O. Box 20191
Kalamazoo, MI 49019 USA
USA

INVIDIOUS

Giving some thought to the fact that this may in fact be the final of all SLAYER MAGAZINE, I felt obliged to convince Metallon to let me interview INVIDIOUS, a young band from the city where we formed WATAIN, Uppsala, Sweden. It is perhaps because they remind me somewhat of us when we started out, or maybe it is their complete lack of confusion and wrong ideas although being rather young, but no matter what this band has really caught my interest. Their Necrovorish, primal Death Metal sounds angrier, darker and unholy than anything new I've heard in years. If I am to decide, this will be a part of the future of what is still relevant and genuine in Black/Death Metal. So here is vocalist P. Profundis on the interrogation chair.

Judging from how it sounds, INVIDIOUS have crawled far into the forgotten, most unholy parts of the Death Metal swamps and somehow forgotten the way back. This is of course brilliant. What inspired you to go that way, your hatred for the living or your love for the dead?

- It's really hard for me to put my finger on why and how we ended up where we are today, but at the same time I know about every step in the process of going there, this swamp. It's the passion of holding the spiritual foundation of this art form to heart & becoming another being while creating it.

You were first called KAYALYSATOR and released one demo in 2004 under that name, but then something happened, and you released the following statement "INVIDIOUS is exactly the same band as KAYALYSATOR, but with a different purpose. With the first KAYALYSATOR -tape we only wanted to play old-sounding-death metal.. But now we have understood that it is so much more and with the "Mass Genocide Ritual" tape we wanted to go further, we wanted to explore the Metal of Death. With this new demo we feel that we have created something really disgusting and fucked up, great shit. We feel just like a new, ugly, rotten band with this tape, and that is exactly what we now have become..." Can you develop a bit further on this new direction and where do you see it taking you in the future?

- This development was spawned at the same moment this band was born, in year 2005. And have since then been growing into something we never would imagine it to become. Taking hold of us and our listeners in a very powerful way. Going back again, into the dank darkness of old. And INVIDIOUS will always be developing and growing this way as a band, taking things further into death. And this is something very important and is one of the things that have made this band what it is, and will become.

What is 'Metal of Death Uppsala', and what bands belong to it?

- Uppsala Metal of Death is a union of bands and people delving in the dark arts of what Death Metal really is, something beyond superficial matters that is very common among 'Death and Black Metal people' in these days. We are digging deep into the body of this art and taking this music and lifestyle to a whole other level. The three bands that are labeled this is DEGIAL, INVIDIOUS and GRAVELESS. And except for these bands there is a group of people all sharing this view upon this music and tradition.

Your members are active in all kinds of bands like IN SOLITUDE, DEGIAL, DEFORMED and whatnot. Isn't it irritating to not be able to focus on just one thing? Do you really have to have a band for each music-genre you like?

- Well, all these bands you mentioned have all taken part of a long process of birth, all together. Taking place in many emotions and times. And are not formed one by one, and because of 'music-genres'. But we have all been able to handle these bands with equally as much passion and fanaticism as the other. Every band with its own personality and face. For example, DEGIAL has nothing to do with INVIDIOUS, musically. (Well... - ED) It just turned out that way that these mothers couldn't give birth to more people with this passion for it, sadly.

"Hanging helpless above the pentagram, Sacrifice swings within leather noose; Sing the ancient hymn that makes the Abso roll! Raise the rusty knife, let loose the blood of Kingu..." With such lyrics it must have been hard for MORBID ANGEL NOT to draw Hell's attention to them. Is the lyrical side of Invidious as important?

- Of course! INVIDIOUS music without the lyrics would be like the tsunami without water. They both need each other to exist. And without each other they would fall just as 'helpless' as MORBID ANGEL writes here. One should never forget how important every bone in the body of your music is.

While on the subject of bones, MORBID ANGEL, and tsunamis; Wrath from Averse Sefira told me a very interesting albeit frustrating story about these things a while ago; "Jon from NECROVORE met me at a show and asked if I had the contact info for MORBID ANGEL's management. I did because I was running the Metal radio show at the time. He said he was going to go for the vacant David Vincent slot (this is right when he left the band in '96 I think?). Those of us who heard this were shitting our pants at that idea hehe... so about 2 weeks later I saw Jon at another show and asked him if he heard anything. He said he got on the phone with Trey and that Trey kind of jerked him around and offered him session duties on second guitar. Jon was insulted and said forget it. So MORBID ANGEL missed out on a second chance at being the best band in Death Metal. I still cry about it."

- Well, so do I! Can you imagine fucking MORBID ANGEL with Jon Deplatchet on vocals?! Talk about a tsunami WITH water! The twisted hell of MORBID ANGEL with Jon Deplatchet's restless darkness would probably be, the peak of this art form, and all that comes with it.

What would the future of Death Metal look like in a perfect world?

- Unbound and unlimited to everything that Death Metal isn't and constantly absolute in everything Death Metal is. Being the steaming black grave the music was born in, and hopefully will die in. People putting blood and soul into their art. Taking the listener beyond. Just listen to the "Altars of Madness" LP, it makes you live to your fullest, but through death.

Can you imagine INVIDIOUS on a larger scale, selling lots of albums, touring and all of that? Many raw and hungry underground bands are reluctant to this idea which is not that strange, since it is obvious that most bands can't handle that transformation into a larger stage without losing focus. Why do you think it is like that?

- Going back to Death Metal being 'Unbound & unlimited to everything it isn't and constantly absolute in everything it is', I would say, with the backbone of Invidious and myself, that taking this group to a larger scale in the sense of selling a lot of albums and playing live around the globe would be something great. And if we would sell lots of albums and touring, I believe our focus is to strong to get 'out of focus' in this state. But I would never say its a goal of ours. We would prefer making a great hellish impression on a smaller group of people rather than having thousands of people only touching our surface. But if we would have the chance to shake the whole world to its foundations leaving 'Metal kids' with urine in their pants, we would, and THIS is a goal of ours. I believe most bands would loose focus because they are too human, too weak. And probably are not believing enough in their own art to leave it to 'a larger scale'. These sad affords of Death Black 'history' tends to fade away though, which is great, as bands who truly believe in what they do rise with great fires, just take a look at your own band, Erik, and compare it to 98% of the Death and Black Metal 'scene'. But I guess this is something you have already found out by now, hehe.

And the future of INVIDIOUS? What do you have planned ahead?

- Besides releasing the "10, the future of INVIDIOUS is growing into something far more dark & severe than ever before. Writing new songs far greater and sick than all the earlier material. And this is actually one of the most important goals of ours, to always become better. And the day our new material doesn't stand higher than the earlier, we fall.

// Pelle - In Death - on the behalf of INVIDIOUS.



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DEATHRASH

"Faces Of Death" was a 3 track demo that reached me sometime in '86 and I was very impressed by the demo which was in the EXODUS vein with actual good songs. The band was typical for that age, they went the same route as so many others. Sending the demo everywhere and of course getting a review in the infamous METAL FORCES which granted the band even more success. The rumor says that they managed to sell 5,000 copies of that demo eventually which is more than many independent releases these days.

So my first question to original member Pat Burns would be related to this, how was it possible for a band like DEATHRASH to sell so many copies?

- The "Faces Of Death" demo was recorded in early 1986 and was released shortly after. Tony Scaglione had given us the WHIPLASH contact list; fanzines, radio etc- and we sent it everywhere. EVERYWHERE! My memories of 1986 consist of countless hours of making demo tapes and doing interviews. The demo came out at what seemed to be the peak of the underground metal movement and there was interest for it coming from all over the world. It amazed us that so many people would be interested in what three kids from NJ were doing. I talk to people all the time who still have and listen to there "Faces Of Death" demo. We put so much energy into promotion and the payoff was being the #6 "Demo of the Year" in Metal Forces, getting on "Speed Metal Hell 2" and people still remembering us in 2008. I have been sending out advance Cd's of "Unfinished Business" to radio stations recently and it takes me back to those days: writing letters, stuffing envelopes, going to the post office etc.

If I remember right the demo was just copied one by one, at least mine was. So did the band actually copy all the copies themselves or how the hell did you sort that out?

- Yes, they were copied one at a time on a deck to deck cassette player that we basically "borrowed forever" from this kid we knew. He would ask for it back and I would have to keep stalling him because at the time we couldn't afford to buy our own. Thinking about it- he never did get it back! I would make hundreds of demos a week- I was constantly making demos, buying blank cassettes and printing covers, I would strategically visit girls we knew who had access to copier machines at their jobs to get free printing! A "Faces Of Death" demo shows up on E-bay every now and then and when I check it out there is my handwriting on the tape. We saw one go for \$65 recently!!!

The only thing that made it onto vinyl back then was the track "Buried Alive" which was also on the first demo. This compilation was "SPEED METAL HELL 2" and was released by the west coast label NEW RENAISSANCE who among other things brought us the debut of BLOOD FEAST as well as WEHRMACHT just to mention a few. For those who don't know, is that the exact same version of the song that appear on the demo and compilation LP?

- Yes, the version of "Buried Alive" on "Speed Metal Hell 2" is the same version that is on the "Faces Of Death" demo. It has John, Nemo and Me on it and Tony Scaglione on drums. I've seen web sites that say that Tim and Peter were on the "Speed Metal Hell 2" version- but that is inaccurate. The picture on the back is only the three of us because Tony couldn't be in it due to his contract with ROADRUNNER for WHIPLASH. **Some times you hear good things about NEW RENAISSANCE and some times you hear more dodgy tales, how were they treating you? And do you think you gained more recognition because of that?**

- We definitely gained recognition from being on "Speed Metal Hell 2". By being on vinyl it elevated us a little from the rest of the "demo" bands around at the time. "Speed Metal Hell 2" was released in Germany and Brazil as well as the U.S. and more people know who DEATHRASH is for us being on it. NEW RENAISSANCE basically offered 'P & D' deals which means 'promotion and distribution'. The band would provide the master tapes and NEW RENAISSANCE would create and market the vinyl product. If marketed right deals like this work out better for bands because they usually don't involve a transfer of ownership of the music. Most of the labels back then would want to own the music publishing, merchandising and sometimes the bands name! Basically everything that could make money for the 'privilege' of putting out an album and getting your band's name added to the roster. DEATHRASH was offered a few deals like this and we walked away from them. The problem with 'P & D' deals is that they don't fit the 'rock star' myth- get signed by a record label and all your dreams come true. We didn't make any money from "Speed Metal Hell 2" but it got us a lot of exposure and we still retain the rights to "Buried Alive"- in fact it will be appearing on "Thrash Beyond Death".

You had Tony Scaglione from WHIPLASH to record your demo, was that a big boost to the band?

- Tony Scaglione was, and still is, a big boost to the band. Whenever you read something about DEATHRASH he is always mentioned- to this day. We had remained friendly after I left WHIPLASH and I invited Tony to an early DEATHRASH show. Now DEATHRASH put on a GREAT show, we bring a lot of punk/hardcore energy to the stage and Tony really liked us. At the time he said that "DEATHRASH and HALLOWS EVE were the best bands on the East Coast". After Marc left the band we asked Tony if he would help us out with the "Faces Of Death" demo and he did a kick ass job. When he was asked to tour with SLAYER it made us look great that he had been on the demo. Tony Scaglione and I later formed ZERO HOUR and when that broke up I didn't play in a band again until DEATHRASH reunited.

So what happened in '87? the band were approached by other labels, the band was getting ready to record the 2nd demo "No One Is Innocent" but it ventured into nothing. How would you describe what happened?

- It was a weird time. We got a few contracts but they were the same shitty deals everyone was getting. The labels got everything and you MIGHT get to make a another album. We decided to record a second demo, "No One Is Innocent", and see if we could attract more attention. Basically we didn't want to give up our publishing-which is the ownership of the songs. I know bands that are getting back together now and can't release any old material because of bad deals they signed in the mid-eighties. They just don't own the music anymore. I know another band that has had their back catalogue re-released with no input from the band. They also didn't see any money either! DEATHRASH was watching a lot of other bands advance above the "demo" level, and even though it was our choice to hold out for a better deal, we started to get restless. It all came to an end with some us having different opinions and others getting caught in the middle. We cancelled the recording session and DEATHRASH broke up in April 1987.

If you had recorded an album back then, how do you think it would have been viewed today? Do you think you could have recorded which would have been regarded as a classic today?

- For a long time after the band broke up I had wished we had just taken one of the deals that we were offered and put out an album- at least something would have been out there. Now I'm glad we didn't because we can put out the "Thrash Beyond Death" CD with no complications. I don't know how a 1987 DEATHRASH album would be viewed today. Most people who know DEATHRASH are only familiar with the "Faces Of Death" demo- three early songs. With the addition of new members we started writing more complicated songs like "Feel You Die", "Heart Of The Darkness", "A Time To Slay" and "No One Is Innocent". These are the songs that would have been on the "No One Is Innocent" demo had it been recorded. A lot of people consider them to be "classics" so I figure they would have liked them on an album. If we had recorded an album in 1987 it probably would have had poor production due to lack of money and not be available anymore anyway.

Regarding all this, are you somewhat bitter and think that the break up could have been sorted out in a better manner?

- I'm not bitter and I don't think anyone in the band is either. The break up could have been handled better but you have to remember this was 21 years ago- we were all just kids. What the hell did we know? I'm just very grateful to have the chance to play music again with some of the best friends I've ever had. The best part is that we sound better now than we did then!

I assume you must have been pretty young when the first demo came out and all that, do you think your band were mentally able to create an album?

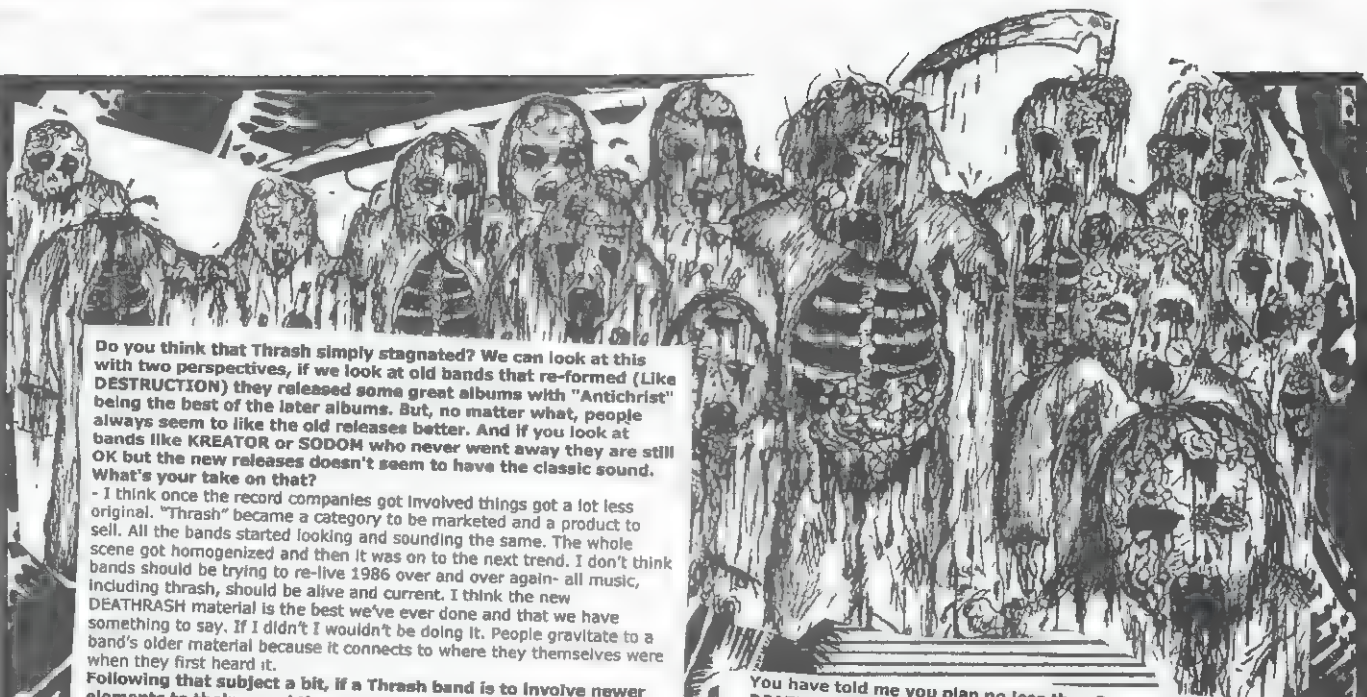
- The day we recorded "Faces Of Death" I was 20, Nemo was 18 and John was 16. I think he had to cut school to go the the recording studio! We definitely could have recorded an album in 1987- everyone else was for better or worse. With the reunion we've had the opportunity to take the songs we wrote 20 years ago and overhaul them for 2008. We're better musicians now than way back then but I can still see what we were trying to do- at the time we just weren't sure how to do it!

Anyway, a big leap in time and around 2005 you announced a reunion of the band as well as a release of the "Faces Of Death" demo (also with other things) on CD, but it seems to take some time to get it released, what is happening with that?

- I contacted Nemo at the end of 2005 to discuss taking the "Faces Of Death" demo and some live cassettes and converting them to CD- I mean these cassettes aren't going to last forever! He told me that he had been watching demos on E-bay go for a lot of money and couldn't believe it. We then got in touch with John and Tim and got them involved. We decided that since there was still interest in DEATHRASH we would release the demo and live tracks. Then we figured that if we were going to go to all that trouble we should put a few new songs on it as well. At this point we had to get a drummer in the picture so I tracked down our original drummer Marc Grossman- who actually started DEATHRASH with me in 1985. We rehearsed a few times and things sounded so good it has become a full on reunion. So the focus of the CD went from being a history lesson about our past to documenting our present. The "Thrash Beyond Death" CD will still have the "Faces Of Death" demo on it as well as our 8/10/86 show at the legendary CBGB's but will feature the new tracks "Thrash Beyond Death", "Red All Over", "Warkeeper", "Unfinished Business" and an updated version of "Buried Alive".

Tell me further about the purpose of reforming the bands, do you think you are able to recreate the feelings from over 20 years ago? How do you think you will do that? You must be in a completely different mindset now so how do you think it still will be the same?

- It's already been a lot better. We can appreciate it more now- there are a lot less distractions. We're not doing it to get rich and famous because we know that's all bullshit. We're doing it for us and anyone else who wants to be involved. There are no delusions of being a "rock star". If this was just some nostalgia trip I wouldn't have anything to do with it. We're back together as a band and we're making the best music of our lives. We recently released the first new DEATHRASH song in 20 years- "Unfinished Business", which is basically a manifesto on why we are doing this. It's been getting great responses worldwide from old fans as well as people who never heard of DEATHRASH before.



Do you think that Thrash simply stagnated? We can look at this with two perspectives, if we look at old bands that re-formed (Like DESTRUCTION) they released some great albums with "Antichrist" being the best of the later albums. But, no matter what, people always seem to like the old releases better. And if you look at bands like KREATOR or SODOM who never went away they are still OK but the new releases doesn't seem to have the classic sound. What's your take on that?

- I think once the record companies got involved things got a lot less original. "Thrash" became a category to be marketed and a product to sell. All the bands started looking and sounding the same. The whole scene got homogenized and then it was on to the next trend. I don't think bands should be trying to re-live 1986 over and over again- all music, including thrash, should be alive and current. I think the new DEATHRASH material is the best we've ever done and that we have something to say. If I didn't I wouldn't be doing it. People gravitate to a band's older material because it connects to where they themselves were when they first heard it.

Following that subject a bit, if a Thrash band is to involve newer elements to their sound they are always considered as trendy, NU Metal or sell outs. Do you think Thrash is more or less because there is neither room for progression or regression?

- If it's a natural progression that's one thing, but if a band just jumps on the current trend to "cash in" that's another. If a band is out of ideas then just stop. The new material we are writing has more complicated time changes and harmonies than the demo material but it is still DEATHRASH because it is still us playing it. It's still John's voice, it's still Nemo's guitar, it's still DEATHRASH. I think the only boundaries are the ones you impose on yourself. With this band at this time there is nothing we can't do. I was asked in an interview recently to pick my "dream" band to play with- I guess they were expecting me to choose Gary Holt, Dave Lombardo etc., but the truth is I would pick the guys in DEATHRASH.

You told me you are working on new releases by DEATHRASH, how do you think you will fit in here? What are your plans for the future when it comes to the sound of DEATHRASH?

- We performed for the first time in 20 years last month and the response was fucking incredible! We played "Unfinished Business", "Feel You Die", "Buried Alive", "Heart Of The Darkness", "Thrash Beyond Death" and "Blood For Blood" on the NY Rocks TV show and it RAGED!!! People really responded to the new material as well as the classics. We will be doing our first shows later this year and we are going to bring the house down. "Unfinished Business" appeared on the Metal Edge Magazine Compilation CD in the June 2008 issue and a lot of people told me they felt it was the best track on it.

You have told me you plan no less than 3 releases of new DEATHRASH in the coming years, how come you decided on that? What is the idea of those 3 coming releases?

- I don't want to give too much away, but a soon as "Thrash Beyond Death" is done we will be working on our next release. We plan to record our first show to be included on that release. There is no built in expiration date on what we are doing- we just want to take advantage of the time we have.

Is any of the 'new' material 'old' stuff? Like for instance material for the never released 2nd demo "No One Is Innocent".

- Just like "Buried Alive" has been re-recorded for "Thrash Beyond Death" we are going to be putting older material on the new releases as well. "Heart Of The Darkness" is going to be on the next CD, which is tentatively titled "All Goes Black". I'm sure "No One Is Innocent" will show up somewhere as well.

I'd just like to thank Jon and SLAYER MAGAZINE for supporting DEATHRASH these past 20 years and giving us the opportunity to do this interview. The best part about this reunion is getting back in touch with so many old friends. I can't wait till you can hear "Thrash Beyond Death"- It will have been worth the wait. ONCE MORE INTO THE PITTS, CAUSE WE HAVE UNFINISHED BUSINESS!



Faces Of Death



OBSCURITY



Well, some interviews are shorter than other for whatever reasons, but since **OBSCURITY** always been an old favorite of mine this interview is printed regardless. Also it can be seen as a tribute to older days when interviews were done by mail (meaning letters) so you never know what do expect. And the idea of publishing the interviews no matter how bad they were when the bands were still good still stands. But, it's not THAT bad is it?

Do you remember the first time you did an interview for us?

Janne - I'm not really sure but I think it would be in no 5? I have looked for the zine everywhere at home but I can't find it, sadly to say. **Lindhe** - I think it was 1987 or 1988.

Anyway, **OBSCURITY** resurrected and have played a amount of shows and I'm pretty amazed by your live shows, it is so odd that you hadn't played live until 2008, how does it feel to finally unleash your live material in a live setting?

Janne - Unbelievable feeling to finally unleash the raw power of our music. I was amazed of the people at our shows, they where really in to our songs. For me it was a dream come trough.

Lindhe - It felt great with a whole bunch of crazy maniacs in the front of you, begging for some evil music.

I guess the main reason for not playing live was the lack of a drummer, right?

Janne - Yeah, at the time when we started the band no drummer wanted to play fast. It was either glam rock or punk. And punks wasn't into that sort of Metal we played. Another reason was that the scene in Sweden wasn't ready for this kind of music and certainly not the local scene.

Is there a different vibe to playing your songs live, do you see them different as they are performed live as compared to the studio recordings?

Janne - It's a totally different feeling to perform them live, we have a better drummer and a much rawer guitar sound nowadays.

Lindhe - When we play all these fast songs, loud and only played one a few tunes, one after another. It feels like we getting into a state of trance. I think the audience feel the same. There is an indescribable feeling you just exists in this short moment. Magic?

So how does it feel now? You played with some great bands during 2008, has this encouraged you to go on further? Like, will you consider to make new material? Or even re-record your old material?

Janne/Lindhe - We are planning to record some new songs. I don't think we will get up on stage again without playing any new songs. Its important for us to concentrate at the task and we won't release anything that we can't stand for. Maybe we will rerecord some old stuff. But we haven't decided if we going to make an official release of it. **Do you think that the fact that you were so early out with your demos that you got sort of ignored, much like MEFISTO or STOCKHOLM?**

Janne - I don't think we got ignored, the music scene wasn't ready for this kind of brutal music in Sweden at that time. We got a bad timing.

Lindhe - We where tired to play in a band with instant drummer problem. We quit the band a few years before the movement of the scene. We didn't know then that the scene would rise and become what it is today.

What about your location, do you feel that your location were against you too?

Janne/Lindhe - Absolutely, it was a crap scene in Malmo. Luckily we have Copenhagen nearby so we could go over and see some good bands. The only band except from a couple of punk band, who played brutal Metal where **OBSCURITY**. There were 20 people in the whole city who listen at Trash, Black, Speed, and Death Metal. You knew everyone by the name, hahaha.

You been involved with other projects over the years but you went back to **OBSCURITY, what is it that is so special about **OBSCURITY**?**

Lindhe - The simple idea of **OBSCURITY** has survived over the years. Strong simple fast and evil songs never die. The recordings are growing old with pride. The friendships are great. How can you refuse not playing in a band like that?

Your demos been released on CD and 7 ep's, that is already a long time ago, is the CD still in print or would you like to re-release them yet again?

Janne - The records are sold out. No, it would not be fair to those who have pay big moneys to get them. (Well, some ideas change as both demos have been re-released on black vinyl "12 now which is the perfect format for them instead of 7's or CD's - ED)

What is the strength of the old **OBSCURITY material, and why do you think it is timeless?**

Janne/Lindhe - It's brutal and raw. We never tried to complicate the music, just keep it evil and fast.

How much priority do you put towards **OBSCURITY these days?**

Lindhe - We have all full time works and families. But we put all our energy and spare time in the band.

Where do you see **OBSCURITY today among all the newer bands? Does it bother you that you are probably over 20 years older than many of the current bands?**

Janne/Lindhe - We have some more experience which it really good. We don't do the same mistake younger people will do so the fact that we are older doesn't bother us at all. I think we have influence many younger people to play this kind of music and we where one of the first band in Sweden to play fast and brutal and we have proved at our live shows that we still can play fast and brutal. **OBSCURITY** will never die!

QUINERARY



Obsessive dark atmosphere that ventures far beyond the boundaries of conventional Black Metal, **QUINERARY** captures the blasphemy and depravity of the Black Mass in audible form.

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Nocturnal Graves

I always had a soft spot for Australian Bastard Metal, and bands like NOCTURNAL GRAVES keeps this interest alive.

How would you like to introduce yourself?

- Interesting. Perhaps I start with a bit of an introduction into the kind of person I choose to be? Maybe not the easiest thing to do but from a personal point of view but I could say I'm someone who embraces a lot of different moods and whilst I can choose to be consistent in my outward actions I'm pretty sensitive internally towards what is happening around me... If you get my drift. I'm usually the kind of person spending a lot of time alone, even when in a crowd I feel alone and it's from this perspective that I interact with others. So it's perhaps quite hard for others to get to know me on a deeper level because I am not open to people I am not very sure about or comfortable with. I'm someone who champions justice, power to the strong and those with a zest for life. Equally I am someone who shares no mercy or compassion for weaklings and stupid folk who choose to suffer through bad choices and no will power. I'm loyal to those I consider friends but there's only a few people in my life which I consider as such. I know perhaps too many people, but always keep them on the outside so as to be a good friend to the few I choose keep close. I enjoy travelling a lot... when I am travelling to other countries I'm also in a much more 'open' mood because I want to experience and enjoy the people, places, concerts and so on. Therefore if you meet me whilst I am travelling and then when I am home you might find quite a different person haha. Other than this I am 30 years old, usually doing something with music (writing, playing or listening), reading, sitting still in silence or spending time with friends.

And you might as well introduce your band too....

- OK these days we are two members, with a good friend filling in on session guitars for live shows. The other one aside from myself is Regan (who also played bass for Destruxtor from 1997 - 2007 or so). He is 29 (sharing the same birth date as myself, ironically), dedicated Metal fan with a wide taste of bands like myself. An interesting fellow but always generally very friendly and easy to socialise or work with. The session member is Paul Decaylust. He also runs the band Denouncement Pyre... A strange little man with a passion for Bestial Black Death Metal bands, knee high steel cap boots, hoodies, Rose Tattoo, pyramids, crop circles, looking on eBay for human skulls and speaking to customs officials to find ways to import them into Australia. He also collects any kind of animal bones he can find with the idea to eventually build sculptures with them. It's an interesting group of people to create music with. All with different personalities and behavioural traits, but a similar goal sonically speaking.

What is aggression to you?

- I think within the context of Metal, it's a state of mind. Listen to a record like SLAYER "Live Undead". Aggression is the feeling that comes when you are blasting "Aggressive Perfector" at maximum volume. The wildfire burning out of the speakers on that record, for me, is the best definition of 'Aggressive Metal'.

Many say that performing or listening to aggressive music gets out all the aggression of your system, can you agree with such a statement?

- I think it's better to say that you channel aggression in a more positive or productive way through performing or listening to aggressive music.

Many people into Metal claims that Metal is everything for them, why do you think that Metal can be such a big factor in any ones life? Do you think Metal replace other things music?

- For me personally I have listened to Heavy Metal since I was about 8/9 years old (since 1988). I know it's different when you are that young, you just listen to the music, get amazed at the album covers and start putting posters of your 'idols' all over your bedroom wall. When I turned about 14 or 15 that's when things started to change for me in particular. I started to form my own views on the world, rebel against what my elders were telling me in school and challenge their spoon-fed ideals etc etc. Music was the thing that inspired me to become interested in philosophy and religion (Satanism in particular) and the 2nd wave of Black Metal was the catalyst for this. This was (as far as I could see) the first time a style of music gave more or less 50% towards the music but 50% to philosophy behind it. It was real life and I held the view that if you are not a Satanist you should not listen to or participate in anything to do with Black Metal. I certainly had a lot of arguments with my friends who I grew up listening to Death Metal with after Black Metal and Satanism became my passions haha. But the point is, I dedicated my life to this kind of Metal and the philosophy that was driving it. I still hold a lot of these ideas, but with experience you learn and grow, you challenge your own ideas and let logic and reason separate fact from fancy.

Since around 1992 I could say that Metal has been a consistent part of my day as it's something I've never gotten out of. I still dress the same as I did in '92/'93 (black clothes, leather jacket, bullet belt etc) so it's just ingrained in my life now. Metal for me has replaced many things that's for sure, but also art in general has replaced a lot. For example I never had many long time girlfriends, just a lot of short affairs haha. The reason is that I have always ended up choosing to spend more time with my art, and not enough time with them haha. It also replaced playing sport and socialising with a lot of herd-like folks throughout my early years. I created my own world and as a result I think it worked to my benefit. Now I just have the outsider feeling. I'm not influenced by trends or modern day fashion, stupid ideas with no foundation in reason and I like to make up my own mind based on what works for me. Something which comes very naturally these days... I think being so deeply into Metal just pushed me in this direction all these years.



Satan's Cross

Australia have crafted a great deal of Metal acts over the years, the problem seems to its hard to break out of Australia. Do you think that has changed now with this useless thing called Internet.....

- Yeah I think it has changed, but not a hell of a lot. We still have the issue of being isolated from the rest of the world so it's hard for Aussie bands to play shows in Europe or the USA. It's not too hard to work out that in order to break out of your own country, you have to play live. You have to play a lot of shows in a lot of different places to expose your music to a lot of different people who otherwise wouldn't know about you. But it also depends on what the artist wants. I don't want to tour and play shows every week. I prefer to create music, record it and see it released. I'm not worried about the sales, that's up to the record label. A few shows a year or a tour every two years would suit me very fine.

DESTROYER 666 is a band that branched out and went to Europe, are they some sort of 'idols' to the Australian bands?

- I think they took a risk, grabbed the opportunity with an Iron fist and made it work. Great stuff and I am happy for them but it's not something I would do personally. So I can't say they are 'idols' for moving overseas... To me they're great mates who make fucking killer Metal.

It is an interesting thing with the lifespan of extreme Metal bands, very few keep on releasing quality work and in most cases there is a few good releases before everything is watered down.

(Obviously I do know there are exceptions but....) So anyway, how do you see NOCTURNAL GRAVES in all this? And would you be able to see when your band should be buried?

- I agree with you. To me it sounds like a mix of things; bands loose their hunger for playing with aggression and power, they get better at their instruments and want to show it off, then they want to have a clean sound so you can hear their tricky little intricate changes and guitar wankery. They loose all the appeal from their early releases (In my opinion). A band who I respect is DARKTHRONE. I like that they don't want to progress, I like that they record their albums with that garage drum sound, I like that they don't take out the guitar feedback and noises at the end of songs or during bridges. That's an attitude I can respect. We will end the band if our music doesn't give us any feeling when playing it. But we won't change our sound and get more polished. In fact our latest recordings are more raw than the album and we'll continue in this direction. I hate when bands change so much and loose the sound that made me worship them in the first place so I'll always try to stay objective in that regard.

As far as musical quality goes, you went the long route with demos '77's before ending up with the magnificent "Satan's Cross" album. Do you think it is important to go that long route?

- Yes I think it's important because (at least in the 'underground' - if you can still call it that?) you should get your name around as best you can. You should also use that time to find your sound before you make an album. There are so many albums released today by bands I have never even heard of, and I still try to keep up to date with what's happening in the underground. Bands like NECROS CHRISTOS for example, great band, released some demos, EP's and there is a growing buzz about them. You check them out and by the time the album arrives, you know you will get a quality product. But that is very seldom these days because too many new bands just release a shitty CD in 500 copies, paid by some shitty label who want to release anything... So yeah, I believe, in the long road even if only for developing your sound prior to an album because great albums will be un-earthed sooner or later.

If you were to put your album in a collection with five other albums, who would you chose and why?

- OK I'll try to pick albums that had some influence on the way I write music, and which I personally can relate in some way to NOCTURNAL GRAVES. I have so many favourite albums from Heavy Metal to Black Metal but here's 5 albums that influenced me when it comes to NOCTURNAL GRAVES:

SEPULTURA/OVERDOSE "Bestial Devastation/Seculo XXX" LP. That SEPULTURA recording is fucking evil, and the raw sound with lots of reverb on the voice is possessing.

SODOM "Obsessed By Cruelty" because it's the epitome of Chaotic Metal. The wildness of this recording is a feeling I aim to capture in NOCTURNAL GRAVES (but alas, I don't think I ever will!)

DESTRUCTION "Infernal Overkill". Mikes guitars on this album is an influence on the way I write guitar riffs with lots of the little twiddly bits and hammer-ons.

SARCOFAGO "INRI" because of the insane voice and possessed drumming.

BATHORY "Under the Sign of the Black Mark" because of the aura of overwhelming darkness and the fast hammering drum rhythms where the snare drum is driving the beat, rather than the normal kind of Thrash beat where it's the bass drum leading. I use that beat in a lot of NOCTURNAL GRAVES stuff and it's taken straight out of "Under the Sign of the black Mark".



Do you think that NOCTURNAL GRAVES one day can be compared to those classics? Or, how do you think your music will stand the test of time?

- I don't think we could be compared to those classics because in the very least we are re-arranging what those bands did in the past (to an extent). Those bands created this style, they were the first and therefore rightfully earn the status of their albums being 'classics'. I guess our music would stand the test of time as long as the songs are well written and capture the right feelings in the listener. I think it comes down to how good you are musically in capturing the spirit of the moment that makes an album a classic. So many factors have to be in place that it's kind of luck of the draw as far as I can see. I'm sure things such as musical chemistry between members, personalities of members, your surroundings, living environment etc all add in some way to the outcome of making music. If everything fits, then I guess you have the optimal platform from which to write music that stands the test of time. Still, I guess it's up to the artist in every case to find what works best for them.

What kind of quality test do you do to your own material before you decide the music has the reason to live?

- I think I've (after all these years) finally found the best way to write and record my music. These days I use a cu base and a laptop computer where I record guitar rhythms to a click track then use an Alesis electronic drum kit to record drum ideas over the riffs. I become immersed in writing new ideas and when the song(s) are taking shape I do a demo of it as described above and listen to it over and over. I just keep developing it until it feels like it's finished, write lyrics, add vocals to the demo and see how the song(s) sound. I scrap quite a lot of stuff in the process so it's pretty time consuming. The quality control comes firstly from myself and when I'm satisfied I show it to R (bassist) to get feedback and also a few close friends who always give an honest opinion and criticise what they don't like and why.

Do being a musician fulfil yourself as a person?

- It definitely fills a void where creativity would otherwise become an obsession stopping me from being able to live a normal life. I think if I had no outlet for creative expression, then I really wouldn't be a very nice person to be around haha.

Has your priority towards music changed over the years?

- It has indeed. Creating music is now one of the top priorities in my life alongside surviving (as number 1).

Do being a musician makes you more picky concerning the music you chose to listen to?

- Hmmmm, I don't think so because I don't listen to music in order to pick at the quality of musicianship. What I look for is music which gives me a strong emotional response. Therefore I listen to Metal from Heavy to Black, 70's progressive bands through to punk and Rock 'n' Roll. I also am quite fond of (at times) Noise and old Industrial music (NON, THROBBING GRISTLE, NURSE WITH WOUND etc). Within the sphere of my music collection range Evil Metal demos made by young kids who could hardly play but gave 110% to their music, through to the stuff played by masterful musicians (like RUSH, GONG, PINK FLOYD, ELOY etc) which also capture me totally due to the feeling in the music. So being a musician doesn't make me more picky. I just look out for what gives me an emotional reaction and depending upon my mood, the variety of sounds I like to hear may be very vast.

How do you view growing old as a Metal head?

- I still love Heavy Metal but I'm not very fond of the scene anymore and I sometimes think I'd like things to be more interesting again. These days I don't go to many gigs and things like that. But I'm also not limited to only enjoying Metal in my life so it's not really something I think about. I focus a lot on my life etc. but I don't really include Metal per se in those decisions. I just do what feels right for me and what I think will be of the best benefit to me as a person. Maybe thinning hair is the worst thing about becoming an old Metal head haha.

What do you wish to accomplish with NOCTURNAL GRAVES that you haven't accomplished yet?

- Well, playing some gigs in Europe will be great. But really I just want to write music that I'm happy with and for each release to get better musically. Since I don't have high ambitions to tour the world and sacrifice my life for the band, I think making music that satisfies me is what I would like to continue accomplishing. I'd also like to finish up with a nice (reasonable sized - ie. not NUNSLAUGHTER) collection of NOCTURNAL GRAVES vinyls.

How is it to experience NOCTURNAL GRAVES in a live setting? How do you view the alcohol culture towards Metal? Like, how is it to perform in front of a alcohol influenced audience as opposed to a sober one?

- I'm not sure because I'm always on the stage! But in terms of what we wish to invoke from both the stage and audience - Madness!! We like the audience to become possessed by our music, to go crazy and invoke the essence of the black flame within themselves. Performing in front of people drinking alcohol is fine. I think that after drinking alcohol a lot of primal, raw emotions start to run free in many headbangers so, by all means drink your fill and get crazy. If people don't go wild I kind of block out the crowd. I sink into my own world mentally and just focus upon channeling energies I normally don't experience the flow of when I'm sitting at home in front of the computer or something. But if the crowd is wild then of course it inspires me to interact with them in some way, and to release those energies together with them.

Do you see yourself starting a new band after NOCTURNAL GRAVES might die?

- Absolutely, no question about it. I will always be involved in something to do with music. Obviously I would like to play different styles of music at some stage also... let's see what the future holds.

My memory isn't what it used to be, but didn't NOCTURNAL GRAVES break up at one point?

- We never broke up but we did say that we will do one more album and stop the band. Right now things are very productive and we have a lot of new material... but truth be told if I find myself painted into a corner and struggling with creativity I would have no problem to put the band on hold and focus on some other project(s). If the inspiration never comes back for Nocturnal Graves then I just wouldn't continue with it... But sometimes it requires making the separation from the music and removing the pressure to work on new and better material in order to get creativity flowing again. I'm sure you would probably have felt like that with Slayer Mag many times over the last 20 years? You say it's over and get rid of any pressure... then suddenly you wake in the middle of the night and have the inspiration to do something. At least that's how it works for me.

How much of traditional Heavy Metal you think can be usually find in extreme Metal?

- I think it depends on the band. DISSECTION is considered an 'extreme Metal' band and I think it's pretty obvious that those people are/were fans of traditional Heavy Metal like ACCEPT, JUDAS PRIEST, IRON MAIDEN and others. I can also hear Heavy Metal influences in bands like NIFELHEIM, GOSPEL OF THE HORNS etc. I think it's usually to be found in the guitar melodies more than anything. But also all the bands which use guitar solos, I think that's probably the most obvious thing about all old Heavy Metal bands. All old songs had solos, well, almost all.

Music stagnate, trend happens, things goes in circle. How do you view extreme Metal these days? Personally I'm very fond of recent releases of NIFELHEIM, WATAIN and FUNERAL MIST. Do you have any recent releases that can be concerned as all time classics?

- I'm also very fond of the releases you mentioned by those bands. They have real feeling in the music and I think it's pretty obvious that the people recording this music are standing 110% behind what they are doing, and are channeling real things into the music. This could be a reason why they've been able to write modern classics? Another band which is new but I think is great is TRIBULATION from Sweden, also REPUGNANT's album is for me a classic. Strange, it all comes from Sweden right now haha. But also the new DESTROYER 666 album will be a future classic in my eyes, along with the last albums by the bands you mentioned. There are also other bands like PRIMORDIAL who write music that seems to be timeless and not connected to any kind of "scene" (where bands like WATAIN, FUNERAL MIST, OFERMED etc all seem to have a connection from where I stand). I think some of their albums will be considered classics due to this timelessness. Also ANAEL released an album "On The Wings Of Mercury" which for me has a magnificent feeling that I will always go back to, maybe not all the time, but nevertheless it will never leave my record collection. DESASTER's "Tyrants Of The Netherworld" is another one that comes to mind. There are more but you get my drift I'm sure. Plus it's all subjective, what I consider a 'classic' you might consider it a joke and so on...

Do you think that underground fanzines are the one that have suffered the most this age because of the Internet?

- Yes indeed, it has all but killed them off! Also the worlds postage services with their ever increasing prices making it a financial pain in the pocket to send magazines out of your own country. But I also think the scene as a whole has suffered from the Internet and become totally 'normal'. It's now more and more full of non sensical idiots with no passion for something they got for free by downloading it off the Internet! I am still passionate about Metal music because growing up it was something I had to sacrifice for. I had to go without eating at school to save my lunch money over weeks to buy one LP or tape. And also being a student without a job, trying to get money to send letters to bands to buy demos etc. It was something I worked for, lived for and sacrificed for and I know you would know what I mean with this. Metal was my world when I was growing up because I gave so much for it. With the Internet you don't have to do shit for it. Kids just need to ask their parents to pay a higher charge so they can get more download time.

As always, approaching the end. End it as you want.

- Thanks for the interview Metallon and for the great reading pleasure I have had from your work with SLAYER MAGAZINE. Issue 10 played a big role in the formative stages of my teenage-hood (what I was saying earlier about the Black Metal explosion from 1992/1993). Thanks also for your support and interesting questions.





ART (c) EVA SANNE



But to be more serious, why to play in front of a audience that really didn't get it? I assume it just fires up the hate to hate everyone even more doing such a gig?

Well most of the crowd there had never seen us before, as they were too young and that I did not care about. But, there was a small crowd of much more important and older people there, like Johnny Death and so on. Now, these are the important ones and all our anger and aggression was aimed at these fuckers, but there was also someone very important who was no there.

Also it was a kind of short set, how did you chose what tracks to play? Do you think anyone cared?

- It was short, but that's the way this thing was organised. Anyway, we are old and fucked up so i think we may have died on the stage if we had played for an hour or whatever. It took us some time to work out exactly which pieces of shit to do at this show. The very first and main song we thought of was "The Magus", because that is for our old and original fans, the fucking kunts. There were a number of songs like "Astral Abortis" and "Fucked Up And Buried" that we almost did, but when time is limited you can't do all of them, so we did "Death Mental", "Voltage by Sadism", "Elektrokution", "Ipsissimus" and "The Magus", plus we fucked around to give us some more time on the stage.

Your last song was dedicated to me - I guess that is a good proof that everything truly is over...?

- Yes, that is true. I had to do it because it was very important. I did not give a shit if not one single person at that place did not know who i was talking about. The main thing is that i knew what i was saying and it was an important way to end what was the last ever live show by SADISTIK

EXEKUTION.

SADISTIKLY EXEKUTED

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Stephen O*Malley picture (c) Metalion

- No I don't consider it groundbreaking and I'm generally disagreeing with this common hyperbole. There are many streams of thought that you cannot conceptually break musical ground any further after people like John Cage, Xenakis, Stockhausen, [Insert preferred peak artist here] etc (there are also just as many in complete contrary). I do not necessarily agree with this in fact, but I do have the opinion that it is necessary to believe this principle in general in order to progress your own work such that it outstretches a young artists easily overextended ego. The important aspect here is that it is progress for us as players and composers. We are stretching our limits and pushing our selves into new areas in our experience... the external opinion of what actually happens in the alchemy around the music is useless, or a discussion of impression at best. SUNN O))) has been fortunate that we have a good number of people interested in what we are doing in order help us to sustain and continue with it and we are grateful for that.

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Greg and I agreed at the onset of this project that we would only allow it to progress in a way we mutually agreed upon and that we wouldn't limit ideas whenever possible. I think it's this formlessness, or perhaps, the flexibility of so many forms which has allowed us to progress together on this project to the point where it has arrived. Its that element that at the same time has removed us from a lot of the typical and debilitating "band issues" and gives us hope for escaping petrification. Either in time or in ideas. For when that does happen it will be finished.

How can a musician understand he reached his full potential and how can he understand his masterpiece is yet to be made?

I don't know, but hope to be the beneficiary of this sensation at some point in my life. It certainly has not happened so far, as even with each step there is a broadening of the reality of how little movement we have made. This is accompanied by the awareness of the expansive, vast amount of musical knowledge and form which exists to be explored, much less understood or implemented. I do believe that many musicians in the towel too early once the comfort zone of marginal successes is the picture. That just tells me that they had something better and more beneficial to do anyway. These are issues that one needs to face much later in the lifetime anyway... or along the lifetime. As long as things are moving and evolving there is continuity. Stagnation is obvious often, but when it does end it should be more obvious if you have the pieces in order.

If we look at SUNN O))) what are your ultimate goals with your live rituals? How do you feel about it personally.....

Simply, right now I'm looking to finish the touring cycle we started in summer 2009. Its over 70 concerts, which is the most we have been able to do in one period. Even the idea of a "cycle" is new to us in this way. As much as I appreciate the music and musicality of what we are doing in the live setting, we do think its arriving at the end of its tether in this form. It is simultaneously at the apex of a quadrant and the funeral pyre of a human egocentric version of the O))). In any case the exciting and exciting part of the core of O))) is the openness to metamorphosis and change. The band would certainly not have continued to exist as long or effectively, freely as it has without this one, critical, trait.

What is your impression of the crowds that comes to witness your rituals?

Hopefully its pleasure. To be honest I'm amazed that people come with such an open ear and mind for what we are doing, and that it seems to increase the more concerts we perform. I have a lot of respect for people who are willing to open themselves and attempt to appreciate what SUNN O))) is as a very real sensibility. If the result is understanding, dislike, awe, confusion, disdain, worship, enjoyment its not as important as the experience making an impact in itself. There is a huge canvas of expression to be had in this situation. And if you can leave your expectations or logical confines at the door you will be better off for it.

BTW - is it OK to consider your concerts as rituals or do you prefer another term?

Sure. I personally call them concerts but there are obviously, more or less, ceremonial aspects to the entire situation.

Attila has been involved with SUNN O))) on many a occasion, I personally find him to be more interesting as a musician than than in MAYHEM for instance - what do you think?

I agree. I personally feel that his performance on "Aghartha" is his finest recorded moment. The execution is so singular and reaches quite deep into his personality and character in a real way. Not to mention that the actual level of the recording, technically. As a long term fan of MAYHEM its hard to compare things to "De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas" but then again, why should one compare? We are talking about a completely different era and context anyway. Its a bit like comparing AC/DC, Broadcast and Univers Zero. We think sincerely, and with no disregard to MAYHEM at all (because he was working with SUNN O))) for years before he reunited with MAYHEM), that SUNN O))) has offered Attila the space to emerge with many of his new experiments and ideas in a format where the risk was there, but perhaps it wasn't as critical, more libertine than it was used to. With experimental music there is space for change, a lot of space, and this allows one to try new areas in real time without the sacrifice of total commitment to the long term with those ideas. I know that SUNN O))) allowed Attila to experiment more as a performance artist, something which carried over very much into MAYHEM especially in the 07-08 period, to various degrees of effectiveness. As a fan and as a musician, I'm proud to have been able to work together with Attila, and to get the chance to continue to do so. Attila should be viewed as a great improviser of our times, not constrained by genre or definition. I sincerely hope that his music and art elevates beyond genre ghettos over time.

What do you really think of Metal these days, do you think there is any depth to it or is it just entertaining and nothing deeper?

Well in some ways I think its basic: the "feeling" is definitely over. To this end its either an exercise in sentimentality and/or conservatism, or an excursion in progression of music in general (with Metal as a several times). Ive been a Metal fan and Metal head for years (same haircut since the late 80s) and continue to be so. As one becomes older and more immersed in the big and actual historical picture of any music style, the classic gems and benchmark albums tend to dominate one's perspective. This results in a lot of jaded and negative attitude toward the medium itself and also the disease of narrow-mindedness. Its a bit discouraging and unfortunate as there is constantly interesting material being made out there. I'm not saying that its always on cello with the great watershed years like 83 and 89, 93, etc but curiosity continues to reward. Because the obscure threading between music and ideas in general becomes a web which encapsulates it all. I find it amusing when older men turn their back on Metal out of an excuse of mediocrity, boredom or even "maturity". Its such a typical excuse to try and find some sort of vertical movement in ones taste. I'm still convinced that the best death metal bands are some of the more avant-garde musicians of our generation.

There is still a lot of Metal things related to SUNN O))), is that a tribute kind of thing?

I'd be happy to continue to understand what SUNN O))) is doing as relating to Metal, because that's exactly what it is! I'm confused about the tension which seems to exist between the perceptions of what is and isn't. To me it focuses completely on the power that Metal music is able to access in pure ferocity, energy and even bliss. Greg and I have Metal and hardcore deeply en-grained in our musical backgrounds so its really in there. Its as actual as it can be. Because of this it is also a tribute in a way, but this is a more honorable approach. To me "Into The Pandemonium" provided a certain type of challenging influence which in some ways may be a Rosetta stone for "Monoliths & Dimensions" perhaps. Somehow the direction and ambition could be interpreted as a 21st century interpretation of that album. Not entirely, but honestly it is there in spirit. I will tell also you this: a SUNN O))) concert is raw power personified and its execution transcends the typical Metal experience people have become accustomed to.

One thing is your music, but then you also have your record designs which is always very delicate, its like your releases are worth owning just because the beauty of them and can be viewed as pieces of art on their own. What do you think of a statement like that?

Well, honestly its a very kind compliment, thank you. I appreciate that because I am also a designer and art director. I always felt that the packaging needs to stand up to the level of concept or energy put into the music itself. When we are thinking about pieces of music in the long term and the albums themselves as archival works this becomes even more important, and it satisfies our need to have great records in our own collections.

I see what you are getting at here though: there are a segment of the public who may buy our records who hold them as visual objects or even small trophies as such, partially or even completely disregarding the music. Because I view SUNN O))) as a multifaceted creature I cannot criticize this approach either... if its bringing some sort of artistic pleasure to someone, then what is the problem?

A lot of your releases is fairly limited and can be seen to be sold for a lot of money, that must bother you to some extent? Or how do you view that whole collector business?

Its a mixed reaction because I'm a record collector myself and enjoy the value of something at the end of the hunt, and as a prized link in a greater puzzle of obsession. Obviously our records are overinflated in some circumstances, and at the end of the day there are a lot of people making a lot more money off of SUNN O))) records than I am, but we don't have a direct influence on that marketplace.

The main reasons we have released limited edition records is twofold in this order: 1) the pressings are appropriate to the material, some things do not deserve to be widespread and available and/or don't represent our major work. 2) to help with financing tours, having limited edition material available at the concerts frankly assists us to continue. I believe that people who sustain themselves through the possibly cathartic nature of our concerts deserve a monument or trophy of value.

At the end of the day, its our art and we always present it on terms that are very well thought out and considered from our side. We are not interested in satisfying every consumer's vital need of assimilation at the same time. Do there really need to be 5000 Gravetemple demo Cd's available for example? And if you really need to hear the music the Internet is a bounty these days.

When was the grim robes first used?

From the beginning there were some pieces used, that's 1998 but we decided to use the robes on our first tour of Europe in 2003. At this point its part of the entire "ritual" (as you called it) aspect and it central in the attempt to make the individual ego more ambiguous on stage in suffrage to the grandeur and charisma of the O))) itself. Which was the intent all along. Its not a costume for your enjoyment, or ours to be honest.



REPULSION

So Tompa, do you remember any early memories of music while growing up and what spurred you on from being a music fan to becoming a musician?

- My earliest memories are rock and roll orientated I guess, getting cassette versions of Chuck Berry, Bill Haley and Elvis Presley albums and blasting them in my kid room, the first album (vinyl) I bought was actually a Chuck Berry compilation, I must have been about seven or something, all the other stuff came later (alternative/garage rock/punk/hard rock etc) from my sisters boyfriends record collection, he got me into bands like MC5, THE STOOGES, THIN LIZZY, BLUE OYSTER CULT, DEAD BOYS, THE CRAMPS, RAMONES, BLACK SABBATH etc. from when I was about ten or something, then everything just exploded, I guess me turning into actually playing music was inevitable and related to me being a fan of Punk rock, which seemed fairly simple to play... I started out playing in a hardcore punk band when I was 13 or something like that... later on, I guess those early Thrash records (POSSESSED, DARK ANGEL, SLAYER, METALLICA, VOIVOD, CELTIC FROST, VENOM etc.) were responsible for me turning into a singer, I was just screaming along to them at the top of my lungs in my bedroom, hehe...

How did you end up being a Heavy Metal addict back in the day? Do you recall your first meeting with that music style?

- As I mentioned earlier, my sisters boyfriend is responsible for the initial meeting with the style, but that was more classic hard rock though, bands like BLUE OYSTER CULT, and WISHBONE ASH had a deep impact on me when I was a kid, I guess it was the mystique surrounding it, I know I was after something else though as these bands lacked the intensity of other stuff I was listening to; RAMONES, THE MISFITS, STOOGES, BLACK FLAG etc... and when I stumbled upon METALLICA's "Ride The Lightning" and DISCHARGE's "Hear Nothing, See Nothing, Say Nothing" in the early '80ies, the flame was lit.

Were you always into Death Metal or...?

- From the moment I first got in touch with the Death Metal sound I was hooked; bands like BATHORY, HELLHAMMER and POSSESSED had already made me ready for what was to come to a certain degree, but when I stumbled upon the underground scene and bands like REPULSION (then GENOCIDE), DEATH/MANTAS, MORBID ANGEL, TERRORIZER, VOMIT (Norway), NECROPHAGIA, INSANITY etc. nothing was the same anymore, it was the first stuff I discovered by myself and that was probably quite important for a lonesome teenager like myself

When and in which circumstances did you end up joining GROTESQUE which had been formed by you, Necrolord and Insulter on guitars, Nuctemeron on bass and Shamaatae?

Was it the really first band for all of you or...?

- I have to correct you on the line-up here, I joined a band called CONQUEST that was basically Kristian and some Thrasher dudes, that later all quit except Nuctemeron (David Hultén) who stuck along for a year or two at least, during those early days it was mostly a question of me and Kristian bashing out noise in his parents basement with different dudes turning up now and then, only to leave pretty fast (because they had no understanding for the stuff that we were into), the other guys you mention, I don't know; Insulter is a synonym for Johan Østerberg, who never was a part of GROTESQUE at any point (although he did play second guitar on the reunion show), he was though an active scenester all the time and edited cascade magazine together with during the late '80ies/early '90ies. Shamaatae I guess is the dude who is now in ARCKANUM, he was eleven at the time that he was in GROTESQUE, and left pretty quickly.

Do you still remember who came up with the name of the band with and who did the logo?

- The band name was stolen from CELTIC FROST, I think it's from a song on "Emperors Return", it sounded twisted and cool, a bit different I guess, Kristian designed the logo, he was, and still is, a king when it comes to Death Metal design, I like the sick, twisted, disfigured style he came up with, it's almost like a graffiti painting or something...hehe.

Did you take the band seriously right from the start?

- We were very young, I guess we were as serious as we could be, everything meant a lot to us, you know how sensitive you were as a teenager, the band was all we cared about, we lived in this different world between the ages of 14-18 I guess, no one in our city knew what the hell we were doing, but we had this huge underground scene to escape to, it was awesome, our own separate universe of sound, visual art and international comradeship.

Why did you use nicknames instead of using your real names? Was it a kind of VENOM approach or...?

- Yeah, we were dead into all that stuff, we had a glimpse in the eye though, we loved how cheesy some of the Brazilian bands stage names sounded; KK Bullet, Skullcrusher and all that, a huge influence, but I guess it was taken out of proportions when looking back upon it, it was all great fun and kind of came with the territory of our vision of what a Death Metal band was all about.

While during the mid/late '80ies the underground scene was ruled by Thrash Metal, contradistinction to it in Sweden happened a great Death Metal boom, does it mean that Death Metal had a stronger background than Thrash, although in Sweden were cool Thrash acts as well, such as MERCELESS, MEZZROW or AGONY?

- We, and most of Sweden's other prominent Death Metal acts, came bursting out at the time of the Thrash Metal fade out, all other bands were playing ANTHRAX, TESTAMENT shit, we didn't have any understanding at all from them, it was a lot of silly rivalry when you look back upon it. We couldn't compromise one inch with our style, it was Death Metal or nothing!!!! I remember we were, for an example, deeply aggravated by SEPULTURA's 'sell out' on "Beneath The Remains". When I think back upon it, the Swedish Death Metal scene between the years '87 - '91 only had about thirty people that were involved, the trend happened later...

What did you feel seeing that Death Metal explosion in your area with quite a good number of outfits popping up from everywhere?

- This happened way later, probably around '92 - '93 or something, we were alone for a long, long time, I can tell you that, there was not even any people coming to shows with this kind of music or anything, the scene was pretty much dead in Gothenburg, we lived in the international underground bubble, and enjoyed it to the max as well. Later when some bands started to pop up it was a good feeling, we were not that alone anymore, but stupid enough, I think we felt some kind of elitism evolving as well, that's we didn't want to be a part of, it was not compatible to the underground spirit that we were raised in.

Were Stockholm and Gothenburg the centers of Swedish Death Metal movement at this point?

- Stockholm had (in '88) only a few bands, but were still miles ahead of everybody else; I was in contact with Nicke and Uffe already in '87, and we traded a lot of tapes etc, we used to stay over for summers and stuff, it was a good time, Gothenburg, as I said before, was dead and silent, we were alone. So, when we wanted to hang out, we went to Stockholm where there was at least a handful of dudes into the underground way of thinking.

In your opinion, did GROTESQUE belong to the first wave of Swedish Death Metal with acts, such as CORPSE, NIHILIST, MEFISTO, CARNAGE etc.?

- The first Swedish wave consists of only one band (and only one guy); BATHORY, later MEFISTO, OBSCURITY popped up which is probably the second wave I guess, if you could even call it a wave. NIHILIST, MORBID, GROTESQUE, CORPSE/GRAVE, TREBLINKA, SORCERY, MERCELESS are the third wave and were closely followed by DISMEMBERIZER/DISEMBLER, AFFLICTED CONVULSION, THERION, CREMATORY, MACRODEX, CARNAGE etc., that was the initial scene right there. Up until '91 I guess that was all that was going on in Sweden at all. If you don't count the grind/crust scene which was closely related to what we were doing with bands like ANTI CIMEX, FILTHY CHRISTIANS, G-ANX, NO SECURITY, MOB 47, ASOCIAL, AVSKUM, SVART PARAD etc...

You were rehearsing in the basement of Necrolord's house, what do you recall from your rehearsals? Did you start writing originals right from the start or were you jamming mostly on covers?

- Well, the first ever time we met it was only me and Kristian, we didn't even know each other or had met. David, the bass player (Nuctemeron) gave me Kristians address and just told me to go there...this was long before cellphones or the Internet kids!! We started going through his record collection and he showed me some stuff he had been working on, we decided to jam and the first stuff we ever bashed out was a cover of (the just released) "Enter The Eternal Fire" by BATHORY, the next time I showed up I brought a few demos and stuff, introduced Kristian to the underground sounds of bands like NECROPHAGIA (a big influence in the early days) and PENTAGRAM, we glued instantly and started working on originals directly after that.

You soon got together your first violent pieces of death and mayhem, "Moondance Prophecy" was a slow song reminiscent of CELTIC FROST/HELLHAMMER, "Shadows Of Lost Life" was a faster song somewhat in the style of OBSCURITY/BATHORY and POISON (Germany), how do you see it?

- Yeah, I guess that describes it pretty much... Kristian was still a lot into the HELLHAMMER thing, he would later become more obsessed with crazy riffing along the lines of MORBID ANGEL, INSANITY, NECROVORE etc... so the first songs were really crude and basic, almost hardcore sounding, we played at the very top of our very limited capability, this was max speed for us at the time, we just wanted to be as brutal as possible...hehe...

These songs respectively "Ripped From The Cross" made up on your first demo titled "Ripped From the cross" do you still remember how was the demo recorded which was probably your first experience? Can you give us details on this tape?

- "Ripped From The Cross" was never a real demo in the modern way of seeing stuff, it was mainly just a rehearsal that we polished (a bit) with extra guitars and spread through the tape trading circuit, it was just us and a tape recorder. In a basement, that's pretty much how it worked back then, nothing fancy whatsoever.

Did you shop around the demo to attract label interests? Do you think that the demo opened some doors for the band? What type of reviews did you get for this tape?

- As I said before it was never a real official demo like that, we didn't send it to any of the bigger magazines or anything or labels for that matter, we were not really interested in all that, it was more important to us how the die-hard underground dudes would greet it, so we got a few mentions in a few small fanzines, that's it basically, and we were dead happy with that as well for that matter.

After the releasing of the "Ripped From the cross"

Shamaatae quit and instead of him joined Offensor (aka Tomas Eriksson), why did he decide to leave the band and how did the new guy get in the picture exactly? What about his musical background?

- Tomas Eriksson came into the band after having played a show with us, with his other band (a local Thrash band) where he played the guitar, he was interested in playing drums for a band, and we were looking for members... as he was not into the whole imagery and lyrical approach of the band he chose to stay a session member throughout his stay in the band, as it was important for us as teenage die hards that every member of the band was into the same kind of shit as we were his decision didn't worry us much, Our previous drummer Johan Lager (Shamaatae) quit/got kicked out, he was just a kid, I guess his dad was worried about him hanging out with a bunch of weirdos like us, he also stole some of Kristians vinyls...

Was he the first choice or were there auditioned other musicians as well? Did you part ways with Shamaatae on a friendly term in the end? Were they involved in other acts after their departure from GROTESQUE?

- As I mentioned before, there were not many people into heavy music at all in Gothenburg at the time, we had tried out a few dudes on various instruments, but no one seemed to have a clue what we were after, at least Tomas knew who BATHORY and POSSESSED were, that was at least a start, hehe... Shamaatae was, as I said, only eleven, we didn't hear from him ever again. We later heard he was playing in this troll Black Metal band or something like that, quite funny, maybe we did 'destroy' him after all....

The coming months were spent writing new songs like the epic "Angel's Blood" and "Submit To Death" as well, does it mean, that you immediately started writing new material with Offensor? Did he have a big hand into the songwriting at this point? You rehearsed heavily and composed more complex and evil Death/Black Metal material like "Ascension Of The Dead", "Blood Runs From The Altar" and "Fall Into Decay", would you say, that Offensor was more talented and experienced drummer than Shamaatae and it allowed you to move into a complex direction?

- No, Tomas was just a session member, we pretty much told him how to play, but as you mention we did have more energy and focus because we had, for the first time, a drummer who could actually play! That was quite a trip for us, we had a lot of ideas before but they were never really fulfilled, now we felt we could push the concept a bit further, but all the songs were still written by Kristian and me. Some of these songs had been embryos for a long time in our heads.

On the 4th of May 1989 you recorded the blasphemous rehearsal/demo "The Black Gate Is Closed" featuring "Bestial Summoning", "Blood Runs From The Altar" and "Angel's Blood", an avalanche of Death and hate preparing the wimps for GROTESQUE's first studio recording, what about the recording sessions?

- A 4-track portable mixing desk in the rehearsal room, that's all, it's all live as well - straight to tape, it's distorted, twisted and has a weird aura surrounding it, I think this was as close to real Satanism we ever came. I think the tape is quite scary in some places actually, because of the desperation and angst displayed in the performance. I guess we were surprised how it turned out and therefore decided to spread the tape more efficiently than previous ones.

"The Black Gate Is Closed" was an advance tape for "The Final Conspiracy" LP demo, is that correct?

- That was one of our many plans, we had contact with some guy in Brazil who wanted to release an album at this stage, pure f-king underground! Of course we should have kept our mouths shut until we knew it was going to happen, hehe... anyway, as you all know this record never happened.

A rehearsal demo followed this tape, also in 1989, featuring "Angel's Blood", "Fall Into Decay" and "Rise Of Armageddon" was it a better representation of the band? Did this tape sound closer to what you wanted to achieve with GROTESQUE? On this tape was a longer version of "Angel's Blood", how did it happen?

- When we recorded "The Black Gate Is Closed", we didn't have a full version of "Angel's Blood", but the part we recorded was so brutal that we decided to put it on the demo as a trailer kind of, inspired by MORBID's "Deathexorcution" trailer on the "December Moon" demo I guess. The version on that next rehearsal tape is close to the finished version that appears on in the "Embrace Of Evil" if I remember it correctly. We are playing better on that tape, but I like the feeling and atmosphere on the "Black Gate Is Closed" more. I guess we were trying to identify the direction of the band, I think this second part of our history starts with the writing of "Incantation".

You were playing a few crazy and brutal live shows at this point, what do you recall from these gigs? Did you do some headlining local shows or were you opening act for bigger bands as well?

- Not that many shows were actually played, a mere handful only. These were poorly attended and people didn't seem to understand what the hell was happening, I guess it all would have been different if we had a scene to interact with, as the bands in Stockholm had, at least the guys in the other bands showed up at the local gigs there, in Gothenburg we were alone. We did play some memorable shows though, one in Strömstad with THERION, that show was booked by Jon Nödtvelt actually, he was quite young then and also one in Gothenburg with NIHILIST. We were basically too young, around 15-16 to be able to arrange bigger shows and invite other bands.

The legendary November 1989 recording of "In The Embrace Of Evil" featured five songs - this was originally meant to be the first five songs of a full length album on DOLORES RECORDS, another three tracks to be recorded later on therefore, the recording was never released as a demo, what did happen exactly?

- This was another totally unprepared thing, hehe, we just happened to come in contact with this guy who had this studio, we were psyched about the option of getting our stuff portrayed in a real studio sound, we scrambled together the cash that was needed, pretty much for us teenage kids probably, and went ahead to record, we were quite inexperienced, to not say totally, of being in a studio, but I think the result is totally OK when I listen back to it, everything is un-tight to the point of collapse but the underground Death Metal feeling is there for sure, we did approach DOLORES about the possibility of releasing it somehow, but everything just fell apart again.... and David quit the band....

On December 12 '89 GROTESQUE played a truly insane local show in front of 200 people, the crowd was in a frenzy as GROTESQUE launched their brutal Death Metal at unsuspecting victims, as well as a few of your own songs you got to play "The Return" by BATHORY before the show was shut down by local authorities claiming GROTESQUE were a bunch of drug addicted Satanic maniacs trying to start a riot, how do you remember?

- How could I ever forget? We lied to the people at our local high school that were organizing the gig to be allowed to even play, when they realized what we were up to they simply pulled the plug on us, hehe... as usual there was not really any people attending that knew what the hell was going on, but people at that age take each chance to stir up some trouble I guess, and our brutal sound proved to be just what the kids needed to totally let go, hehe... a scandal...

In late 89 Nuctemeron left the band and joined Virgintaker (aka Per Nordgren), what led to Nuctemeron's departure and how did Virgintaker get in the picture exactly? What about his musical past? Were there still other bassists in mind besides him?

- This is all wrong actually, when David quit the band I started to play the bass instead, it was as simple as that, Per Nordgren was never called Virgintaker when he was in the band for a month or two at the very start; he left the band cause he felt that we were too brutal. He was later invited to play the reunion show on his merits as one of the original members though.

This set-back did not hinder the unholy making of new, faster and more technical evil songs, such as "Nocturnal Blasphemies", "Spawn Of Azathoth", "Church Of The Pentagram", "Ritual Mutilation" and the legendary "Incantation" and these new songs fully stated that GROTESQUE never compromised one way or the other, do you agree with it? Would you say, that you had only gotten blacker, more evil and intense?

- Yeah, this is the start of the second era of the band for sure, we started to develop our skills as musicians and writers and gained a lot of energy from being published in more underground fanzines than before, the rest of the Swedish bands had more in common with each other musically, our style of more Satanic, twisted Death Metal was unusual in our part of the world, I guess that made it stand out as well. Yeah, the darkness was increasing by the minute, that's for sure.

Guitarist 'The Haunting' (aka Alf Svensson) had joined the band in the beginning of the year, do you think, that he brought in a new dimension of brutality into GROTESQUE? Before Alf being involved in GROTESQUE, what were the previous acts he has played with?

- I got to know Alf from high school where he was studying arts, he was a few years older than the rest of us, but we clicked instantly, he came from a more Hardcore background, playing in different Hardcore Punk bands around the area but had an urge to write and play some deeply fucked up evil shit. He definitely brought a new perspective to what we were doing. Initially this was just what we needed, later Kristian felt some frustration over his creation being a bit lost in this new version of the band, but for the time that everything worked out, things were killer, Alf had some weird ideas when it came to harmonies that I felt complemented Kristian's intense twisted riffing perfectly and added a lot of disturbing feelings to the sound.

In August 1990 GROTESQUE did the "Incantation" recording (3 songs for the DOLORES RECORDS mini album), did you have a decent budget to record the material? How did the recording sessions go with this material at all? Were you more prepared than for the previous ones?

- I guess we had a budget enough to spend three days in Sunlight studios with Tomas Skogsberg, I can't remember how much it cost but it can't have been that much, we had rehearsed more intensely for this one for sure, and we had also rewritten a lot of the material together with Alf, that had added a lot of extra depth to the songs. We were much more pleased with this recording than with the in the embrace of evil one, I guess we tried to stay away from the obvious ENTOMBED guitar sound that everyone wanted when the went to Sunlight, we ended up with this very strange, ghostly tone that I haven't heard on any recording since, it's really not that distorted, you can hear every note but it's still brutal, today I look back on this recording with pride, we very creating something very different.

Did you have some songs written that didn't make up on the EP?

- This were basically the three songs that we had worked hardest on, the ones we felt represented the new GROTESQUE most, we had older unreleased tracks lying around but they weren't matching the level of brutality of those three songs, that's why we only recorded these three, also "Incantation" is a long f-king song.

The material was released by DOLORES RECORDS in lilac vinyl and black vinyl and the black vinyl version seems to be the first pressing, is that correct? How were you signed by them at all? Weren't any bigger labels interests in the band?

- I could not remember, but it feels correct with the black vinyl being the first pressing. We didn't get any response from any bigger labels, this was at the very start of the record releasing era of Death Metal, you got to remember that, only a few bands had released anything and the explosion hadn't happened yet. We were probably a bit ahead of our time, it's also my feeling that it was some meaning to that as well, that GROTESQUE somehow was meant to be an underground band.

In your opinion, did all of the demos expand GROTESQUE's popularity in the underground scene? Were your materials monstrous hits in Swedish underground?

- No, we didn't have any breakthrough whatsoever, I guess we were weirder than most of the stuff that was emerging, we were also a bit inculcating, we didn't do it for the career, we rather spent our time on producing new stuff than hassle record labels or managers or anything like that.

In 1990 GROTESQUE played their last show, what do you recall from it?

- I had started trying to book some shows for friends abroad, I was a long time friend from Patrick in DISHARMONIC ORCHESTRA and they were doing a low budget DIY tour through Europe, I basically rented the hall at the local rehearsal place and invited them for a couple of hundred bucks or something, this was a perfect chance for us to portray our new stuff in front of an audience, we had not played live since the recording of "Incantation". It was me, Tomas Offensor, Alf and Kristian performing that night and it was a 'greatest hits' kind of set list with material from all our different eras, smoke machine, light show, the whole kit, it was a great experience and also the first time some people came out that actually knew who we were, as the scene had slowly started building up at this point.

Due to contradictions you split up shortly afterwards, why did you decide to break up?

- There are a few different reasons actually, first of all; me and Kristian had been talking about doing another project anyway, we felt that GROTESQUE had said all that we wanted to say, that if we continued down the same path for much longer we would eventually paint ourselves in a corner, and we had such great ambitions. We wanted to make music that was more insane, more artistically challenging and intellectual and we felt that the formula of GROTESQUE needed to be intact and that was a dilemma. We decide to split the band on good terms and start another project; LIERS IN WAIT. I had at the same time started hanging out more and more with a couple of dudes named Anders and Jonas and had helped out their band; INFESTATION on bass and vocals. They were doing a more American/Stockholm version of Death Metal along the lines of AUTOPSY, MASTER, NIHILIST etc and that was a lot of fun as well. I guess Kristian wanted full control of what he was doing and decided to take the drummer of LIERS IN WAIT (Hans, later in THE GREAT DECEIVER, LUCEFERION, now in DIMENSION ZERO) with him and reform the project without the rest of us. 'The rest', i.e. me, Alf, Anders and Jonas would instead form AT THE GATES. All of a sudden you had two bands continuing a part of the GROTESQUE legacy, but in different ways.



After the demise of the band Kristian Wahlin aka Necrolord became known, who painted the album covers for many bands, like EMPEROR and DISSECTION and formed LIERS IN WAIT, you and Alf went on to form AT THE GATES, but what about Virgintaker and Offensor after GROTESQUE broke up? Did you remain in touch with each other?

- As I mentioned before Per Nordgren (who was NEVER called Virgintaker) disappeared from the band after just a couple of months, never to associate himself with Death Metal again. Offensor actually started singing instead and have played in a variety of local Gothenburg bands, none of them releasing anything. None of us have really stayed in touch but we say hi when we meet. GROTESQUE had always been just me and Kristian, though. Alf had some input in the last version as well.

Would you say that GROTESQUE was the forerunner of what became known during the mid '90ies 'Gothenburg melodic Death' Metal or did you address the same concepts that evolved Black Metal but takes a much more Death Metal interpretation through poly rhythmic phrasing and structuralist architectures?

- I do believe that GROTESQUE, as you mention as an option, have more in common with what happened later with bands as DARKTHRONE, SATYRICON etc. We were a brutal, Satanic Death Metal band. It was important for us to be dark and ritualistically pure. That whole Gothenburg thing happened way later, and I do take my hand away from it all, I guess, as we were the first band to play extreme music in Gothenburg we might be to blame for introducing the kids to the sub genre, but I don't think we were ever an influence musically.

Did you have an important impact on bands, such as IN FLAMES, ARCH ENEMY, DARK TRANQUILLITY etc.?

- I guess some of the guys in those bands, the ones that are old enough, came to a few of the GROTESQUE last shows and bought the "Incantation" album, but other than that, no. I guess AT THE GATES had a more direct input in that whole thing, but the formula was later bastardized and made more melodic etc. As I said; I take my hand away from that whole thing. I have nothing against any of those bands, they are great artists and some of them are great friends, but if you ask them they will tell you the same; that GROTESQUE did not have any influence on them musically...

On the Friday 13 of 1996 Necrolord, Goatspell and Offensor entered Berno studio to record 2 songs especially for the "In The Embrace Of Evil" CD, "Church Of The Pentagram" and "Ripped From The Cross", the very first songs you wrote after GROTESQUE's demise, from where did come the idea to write these tunes?

- "Ripped From The Cross", was as you mention one of the very first songs to be written ever by me and Kristian. It was recorded along with the rest of the tracks on the initial "In The Embrace Of Evil" session, somehow that song was lost over the years though and we couldn't find it on any of the master tapes, when DOLORES introduced us to the idea of finally releasing all the GROTESQUE studio material on one CD (maybe to cash in on the success of AT THE GATES?), we felt that we couldn't release it without this significant song, and going to the studio to record just one song felt stupid, so we took one of our old songs, "Church Of The Pentagram", and reworked it a little.

This album unites a session of early material and two later recording sessions, meaning that it is a time lapse double album of a band emerging from itself - it grows and it mutates, erratically, but beautifully, into a direction visibly incendiary in inspiring AT THE GATES, what do you think about it?

- Well, as I said before, it is basically the "Incantation" recording and the "In The Embrace Of Evil" recording, together on one album: as it was intended long ago. The plan that never happened somehow (the "Incantation" mini LP was kind of a compromise). The new recording was intended to fill the gap between the two old ones, I guess the comparison with early AT THE GATES is logical - seeing that both me and Alf were in both bands.

Would you say, that the first part of this album showcases frenetic and violent early songs in the crossover of percussive speed Metal with early Death Metal riff styles and structural variations, especially in the tendency of Satanic bands like SLAYER to use strange pieces of songwriting to build logically communicative top-level architectures? This is an ugly, uncanny bastardisation of Death Metal, the complex song structures and raw, unrelenting atmosphere of early MORBID ANGEL is blended with the messy over-stretched teenage ambition of early POSSESSED with some manic SLAYER solos, crushing slow passages, atmospheric intros, an overtly Satanic image, how do you see it?

- Well, that was a quite good explanation I guess, except for the thing about speed Metal, to me Speed Metal is bands like HELLOWEEN etc, which I think is total crap. We were inspired by POSSESSED, MORBID ANGEL, INSANITY, NECROVORE, PENTAGRAM... stuff like that. Although I guess our roots in music like BATHORY, SODOM, HELLHAMMER, KREATOR, DESTRUCTION, SLAYER. DARK ANGEL shines through on some of the older stuff which gives it that primitive charm. and that mix might be what makes it interesting.

The first half of the album bears a great similarity to pioneers SLAYER as well as SEPULTURA materials of years past; its songs are fast but extract turns of melody and structure and the art of recombines to reveal an inherent pattern and similar to middle '80ies works of Thrash influenced Metal where chorus lines determined major song rhythm and thus a predictable sequence of emphasis points for any phrase, this music rages along nicely with a somewhat confused but aesthetically coherent and structurally focused textural evolution, what do you think about it?

- We were young and hyper, we wanted to combine the furious aggression and brutality of the early favorites, SEPULTURA's first two albums are important here, together with other Brazilian faves such as SARCOFAGO and RITUAL with more complex, profane textures of more intellectual nature, that gives the whole project a twisted feel of something not being quite right, some real insanity going on. And I think this only happens when you are young and inspired in the sense that we were.

Would you say, that a slow melting and recombination of momentum in each riff allows a melody to gel from the associative structures of the song, but the abrupt narrative of violence in embedded rhythms gives the music its underlying strength and encodes an artistic portrayal of an abstract perspective on human aggression?

- There is so much natural teenage aggression on that record, it's all real frustration and anger - all this is played out in a scenery of more abstract musical structures, disjointed ideas almost caving in from the weight of pure hate. This is real music, from the heart.

What about the lyrical concept as a whole? Were you heavily influenced by Satanism, Anti-Christianity, occult things and stuff to use titles, such as "Ripped From The Cross", "Blood Runs From The Altar", "Thirteen Bells Of Doom", "Church Of The Pentagram" etc.?

- GROTESQUE was a melting pot for all our aggression as I mentioned earlier, our way of expressing ourselves was in the most antisocial, nihilistic and misanthropic way possible; Satanism. I was very inspired by the works of Aleister Crowley in these early days and we tried hard to create something along these lines of thinking. Of course some of the older songs are more basic and you can see inspiration from other Death Metal bands being more obvious, but as the band grew, the lyrics had to evolve too, referring more to philosophy surrounding occultism and Satanism than the actual ritual itself, we went inside the psychological depths of this sub religious activity, I am however a militant atheist and am only interested in Satanism and it's thoughts and not the religious practice itself.

In your opinion, is "In the Embrace Of Evil" an extremely nasty listening experience, and a classic example of real Death Metal? Was this record deserved ending of GROTESQUE's career?

- We had quit much earlier, as I mentioned, when we decided to get back together to record those two songs in 1996, it was understood that we were going to do that, and nothing else, we never 'reformed', so we couldn't possibly quit again, could we?

The material was also re-released as a split with AT THE GATES "Gardens Of Grief" EP as well by CENTURY MEDIA in 2001, how did it happen? Were you aware of it release?

- This was done behind our backs, no one is happy with that release, it is official, but we haven't seen a penny from it.

On 26 January 2007 you played some songs in the release party of the Swedish Death Metal book and decided to reunite, what about this book as a whole? Do you think that Sweden became the home of the European Death Metal movement and had a very big importance on the scene?

- I think this book is fantastic, it tells the true story of what happened at the turn of the last decade. Also, the way it was written, in the same enthusiastic style as the fanzines from that period, paints a full picture of the feeling back then. I am happy that Daniel put this project together, it's a great read! About Sweden being some sort of Death Metal capital I don't know, it's not up to me to judge that. Some of the bands involved in the scene has caused a great ruckus and had international careers, so something must have been good! Right?

How did the show go? Didn't you think about to give more shows? What about the line up and the set list as a whole?

- The gig was fun, it was weird for sure, trying to recapture that teenage aggression and angst at the age of thirty something, but because of the fact that the audience was solely comprised by people that were around when it 'happened' originally with members from MERCILESS, GRAVE, TREBLINKA, DISMEMBER, MORBID, OBSCURITY, MACRODEX etc. it made it easier to cope with. The line up was me-vocals, Kristian-guitars, Offensor-drums, Insulter (Johan)-session guitars and Per Nordgren-bass, we played "Incantation", "Blood Runs From The Altar", "Spawn of Azathoth", "Ripped From the Cross" and "Submit To Death". It was a weird but great night. NIRVANA 2002 and INTERMENT played as well.

Did you perhaps film or record the performance?

- Someone, somewhere has something, I know I saw a camera, my advice it to search the Internet forums for this. I don't have any film of any performance I've ever done, as I am no narcissist...hehe...

GROTESQUE interview by Leslie Dávid

On April 2nd 2007 you Tompa announced that GROTESQUE was done after a few shows, does it mean that you put the band for good on ice? Won't be any further GROTESQUE shows, new materials etc. in the near future?

- GROTESQUE is dead, the legacy shall remain intact forever. We did one reunion to record the two songs for in the embrace of evil and one reunion for Daniels book because he is a great friend, that's all, it would not be true to the spirit of the band to try to do this with the same conviction again: I don't think that's something you could ever calculate and try to recreate.

Any final words to our readers?

- I think it is awesome that people are still interested in GROTESQUE, that means we must have been doing something right. Thanks for all the time you spent on creating this interview, it warms my heart that you dedicated so much time trying to reach the inner core of the band. GROTESQUE will always be in my heart, as it is a big part of my life, even today. I believe we must let the band rest now though, to keep he legacy intact... anyway, thanks and take care!!!!

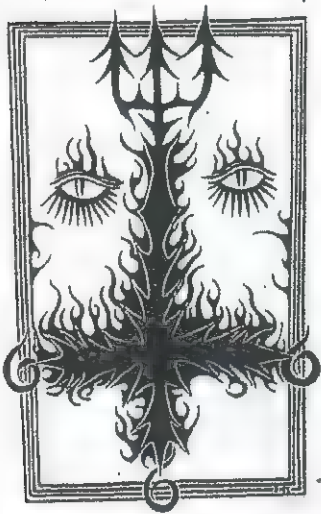
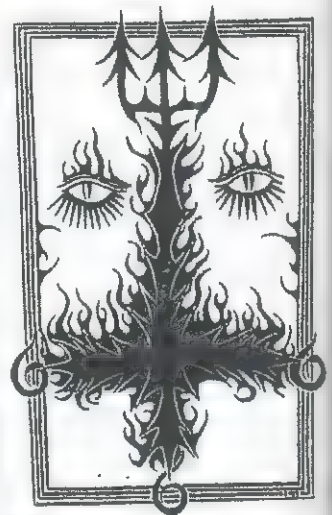
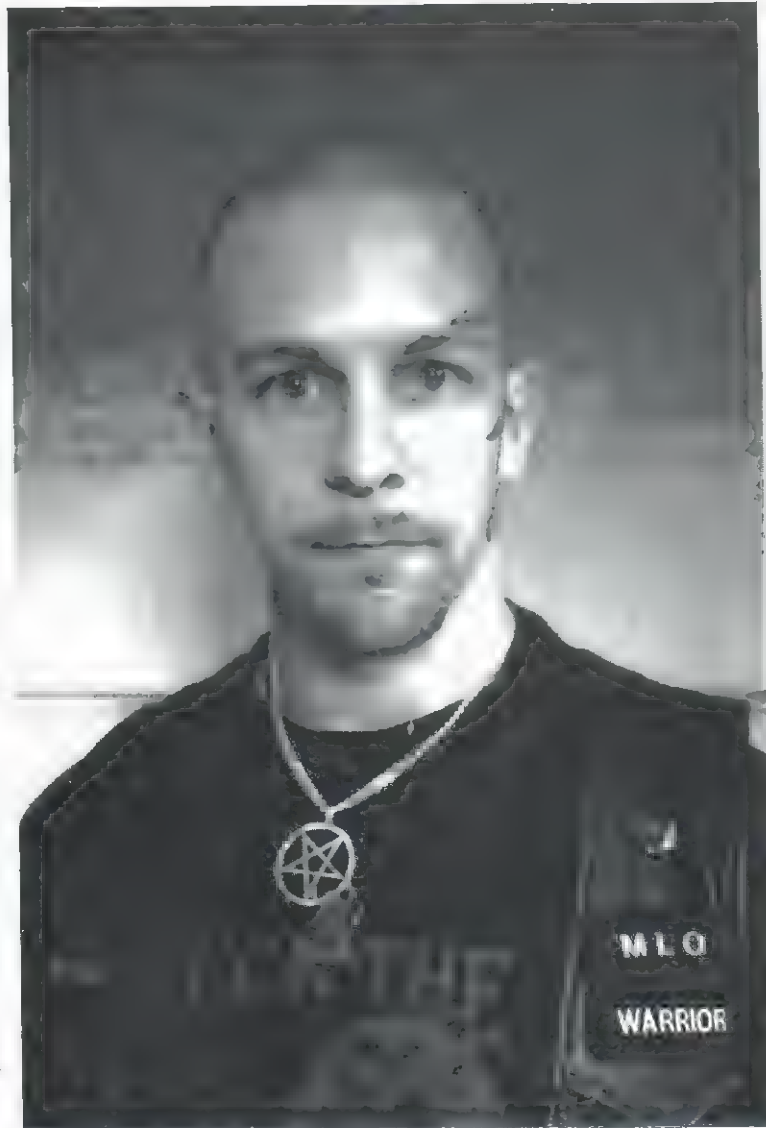


DEATH AXE SLAUGHTER



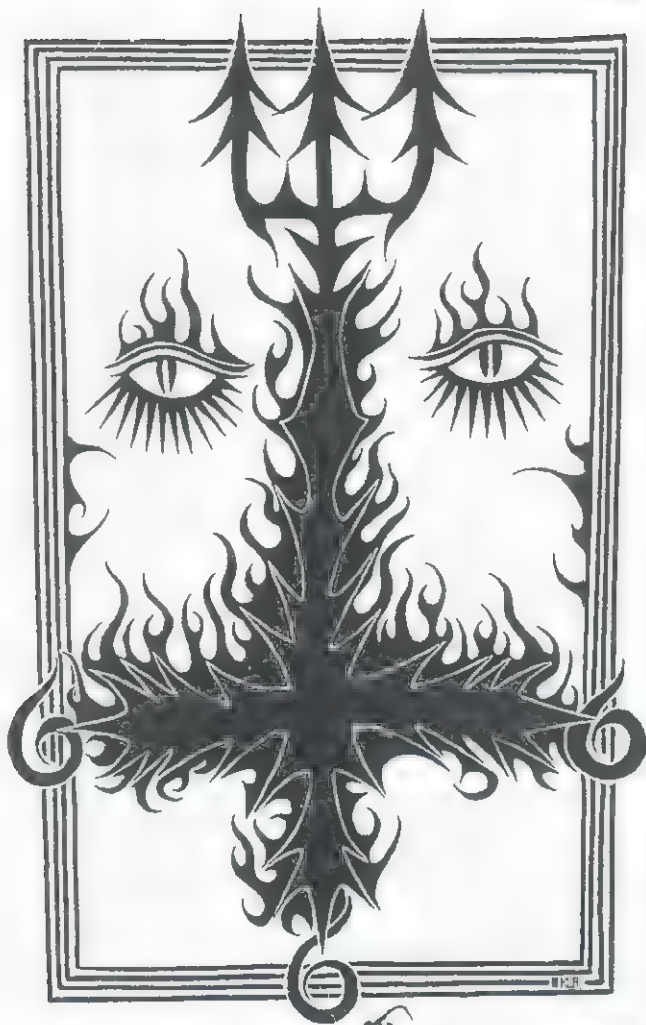
Jon Rödtheidt

28 June 1975 – 13 August 2006



Beyond the event horizon lies the void of my dreams
Imploding eternal darkness, portal to my destiny





Jon Nædtveidt portraits (c) Metalion



Old Thrash Bastard

THE FINAL CHAPTER



Necromancer picture (c) Metalion

NECROMANCER



Name - Jon Necromancer Occupation - To quote Cliff, "Major rager on the 4 string motherfucker".
Ex USURPER/KOMMANDANT. Occasional live session player for gay Chicago bands. Currently starting new full time band with Apocalyptic Warlord and Carcass Chris (both ex USURPER). Should have an album out in the first half of '11. Sleazy, Raw, Metal.

Fave albums - AUTOPSY - "Mental Funeral", MERCYFUL FATE - "Don't Break the Oath", SCORPIONS - "Taken By Force", SLAYER - "Live Undead", DARKTHRONE - "Too Old Too Cold", TED NUGENT - "Scream Dream", IMPALED NAZARENE - "Latex Cult", etc, etc
Fave bands - AUTOPSY, DEVASTATION (Chicago), MOTORHEAD, TED NUGENT, THE MENTORS, JOHNNY THUNDERS AND THE HEARTBREAKERS, WAR, THE MEATMEN, DARKTHRONE, THE WHO, NUCLEAR ASSAULT, GG ALLIN, NIFELHEIM, THE RAMONES, etc, etc...

Shittiest album by a band that released good albums?
- Way too many to mention, but VENOM's "Calm Before the Storm" stands out as a real let down back when it came out.
Fave Not Metal albums - JOHNNY THUNDERS AND THE HEARTBREAKERS - "Like A Mother Fucker", VOIDOIDS - "Blank Generation", THE WHO - "Live at Leeds", GOBLIN - "Roller", GIRLSCHOOL - "C'Mon Lets Go", GANG WAR - "Live in Toronto"

So, why is Metal the best thing ever?
- Listening to Metal is like doing a huge line of cocaine that you never come down from. Its the ultimate adrenaline rush. The problem is that its twice as addictive. It requires a huge amount of sacrifice, and your entire life can be thrown away for it if you're not careful. But, really I think the coolest thing about Metal is the exclusivity of it. The amount of whack jobs that are drawn together to this form of 'music' never ceases to amaze me. Its like the sonic version of a welfare check. We're a bunch of fucking shit bags. We're virtually unemployable. Totally anti-social, girlfriends are rare. In fact, women of any kind are an endangered species. Many, if not most of us, are carrying deep drug and alcohol problems. Our self esteem sometimes is so low we're borderline suicidal. We have terrible taste in music, and most of the 'musicians' in this scene can't play their instruments properly. My kind of people! But we all speak in a language that no one else can understand. Our collective dicks get hard by the same open E power chord. The 'normal' people out there have no idea what's going on and don't understand why we don't assimilate into their bullshit society. And we could all fucking care less....

So, why is Metal the worst thing ever?
- See above.

Was the bad Metal in 'the '80ies as bad as good Metal today?
- That's a very difficult question. Its easy for Old Thrash Bastards like ourselves to get lost in the glory of the old days. "Things were just so much better back in the day." That isn't necessarily always true. All too often we forget about some of the shitty bands that came out back then, and they definitely sucked no matter what decade they came out in. But, I think what makes that time so killer for most of us is that everything was so NEW and so FRESH. Not only to the scene, but also to ourselves as young fuckers who were just 'getting it' for the first time. We were lucky enough to be a part of that early Metal vanguard back in the '80ies. It seemed like there were new, killer albums coming out every week back then, and maybe there even were! Everything was so fresh that we couldn't wait to pounce on a new album like wolves on sheep. I think every generation probably has similar feelings too. I'm sure the kids of the '90ies and the new millennium are just as hard about their generation of Metal, and probably think that those bands are the best. That more of them came out with better albums than from any other era. Probably because it was so fresh for them back then too. Of course those of us who know our shit know that they're all wrong! But all that being said, there is a serious lack in good bands now. This new generation has a real problem with having a firm grasp on what Metal is. Bands like MUNICIPAL WASTE and their happy ilk can all line up and lick my old balls. I'm totally serious. It's a sad shame that the most noticed bands of the current scene are either a bunch of teenagers ripping off bands older than they are, or pussy ass hipsters trying way too hard to be original. Since when is badly copying "post punk" interesting? What about REAL PUNK!!? So, the short answer is 'Yes'.

Do you remember the name of all the tracks on "Darkness Descends"?

- Call me a poser, but there are very few albums that I remember all the track names to, if any. I've always been into the guitar playing of albums. Just the riffs though, not gay solos. That's what I hear first and foremost, and its what I concentrate on. I never gave a fuck about song titles, and especially lyrics. I just have no interest in that end of it. I know that may sound crazy, but I played guitar for 6 or 7 years before I switched to bass in '93. I listen to everything in guitar terms, and remember songs more by the opening riff than by song title. Album titles I'm a little better at, but even those I tend to remember more by the cover art than by the album title. The song title dyslexia even applies to bands that I've been in. You can ask anyone I've been in a band with over the years. At rehearsal I'm always referring to either opening riff, track number, or order in which they appear in the live set. I'm very retarded. We should remember a song title is like Ozzy trying to figure out a remote control.

Concerts that had a great impact on you

- DIO/MEGADETH/SAVATAGE was my first arena show. My first underground show was SUICIDAL TENDENCIES on the "Join the Army" tour with local Chicago legends ZOETROPE opening up. Like all good crossover type shows back then, then crowd was a mixture of Metal heads with spikes on their leathers moshing with old school punks who were shirtless with liberty spikes on their heads. It was literally a bloody mess. Other great shows that stick out were the 1st time I saw SLAYER, EXODUS on the "Pleasures of the Flesh" tour, CARCASS/PESTILENCE/DEATH, any TED NUGENT show, the TOO HEAVY FOR YOU festival in '01 (NIFELHEIM hit me in the head with a side of beef from the stage. My nose was bleeding everywhere, but you might remember that one since you were standing right next to me, Jon) (I remember the night before when you elbowed my nose at the DESTRUCTION show the night before! HAHA! - ED), THE MEATMEN in '94, MORBID ANGEL/MOTORHEAD/BLACK SABBATH, PENTAGRAM in March '09 and AMEBIX just before that were excellent. The AUTOPSY reunion has been good to me, and even OZZY sounded surprisingly kick ass in summer '10. And this sounds gay, but its the truth: every USURPER show I played had a huge impact on me. I love playing Metal live so fucking much, and USURPER was the best way to get that fix. Total leather, spikes, drugs, booze. Can't wait to get back out there with the new project.

The best thing in music history is probably grunge killing hair Metal. What other pieces of musical history do you rate as good?

- That's a really interesting question. Its much easier to point out the worst points in music history. I would have to say the punk rock scene of NY starting (properly) in '74 and putting an end to all that pretentious and solo laden 'rock' of the late '60ies and early '70ies, putting the final nails in the coffin of all that super fucking gay hippy bullshit of the late '60ies, and later messing with the disco generation. It seemed like the first time that music was telling us was complete individual hatred for what society was telling us was 'normal' and 'safe'. And it was a total 'fuck off' to all the lame music of that era. It really started the core attitude for what would later become Metal the way that we all know and love it now. More so, I'd even say, than bands like BLACK SABBATH and JUDAS PRIEST, etc. They had the heaviness, but they weren't even close in attitude. Punk just took the basic principles of Rock and Roll and smashed them in everyone's faces. Better than anyone since in my opinion.

Do you know how to download an album? Do you know what an ipod is?

- I do not know how to download an album from the Internet. I never bothered to learn how. I still insist on buying albums by the bands I like. Its just simple fucking respect to support bands who put out music you love and that affect your life the way that so many have over the years. I wouldn't steal from my friends, so why would I steal from musicians? These young faggots nowadays that steal their entire collection should be ashamed of themselves. I don't even like shopping for albums online. I prefer going to different record stores all over the world when I get a chance. Go hunting like the rest of us do! There is nothing more rewarding than opening up a fresh new purchase. Its bad enough everything has to be on CD, but to download it exclusively!!? Gay. But I do have an ipod. They're great to bring on tour. A real space saver in the van. It has the good qualities of a Walkman. You can put the headphones on and ignore everyone around you. And its smaller than a shoebox.

How much music do you listen to on a daily basis?

- Honestly, not that much. There are very few bands that are putting out albums that I like anymore. DARKTHRONE are an exception, and I like listening to a new MOTORHEAD album when they come out, but most bands now are releasing shit. The old standards are still my favorites, and I have those fucking memorized by now. Most of my day is spent with music cranking in my head, but not necessarily from a stereo.

Who has the biggest right to make useless albums - old bands reforming or new bands with no proper clue?

- No one has the right to make useless albums. Well, maybe Weird Al Yankovic, but that's about it. Should Metal have a age limit?

- Definitely. No one under 30.

Whats been your musical highlight as a Thrash bastard?

- There are too many to choose only one. Getting the box of the first album we recorded in the mail was a highlight. Our first European tour ruled. Traveling always kills. And of course meeting and getting to know the handful of cool people in the world that are complete die hards. Both SLAYER editors included.

What are some things that interests you besides Metal?

- There aren't many. Its not that I ignore other things on purpose. I think its safer to say that I ignore them on accident. Driving super fast in my 1973 Chevy Nova with the tones cranked always interests me. Ignoring people that don't interest me interests me....

Fave quotes? - "Ooga Booga! Where da white women at?" - traditional, "Fuck that shit. I don't give a fuck!" - Jeff Wilson (like only he can), "I feel quite at home in a world all my own. My rulebook is thin, it says don't come in!" - Walter Lure, "I don't speak jive!" - T. G. W., "Alright Piekars, drop the cone!" - High School Bully

Whats your words as the last old thrash bastard

- "...last old thrash bastard...". There aren't many thrash bastards left, young or old, anymore. I supposed that could be a good, or a bad thing. But some of us are still around, and even one is plenty to fuck up the party for everyone else. As far as the last one in SLAYER? Its a total honor, obviously. On a personal level its amazing. The magazine has been a huge part of Metal and how I've enjoyed it in my life. Head Not Found too. My life might be very different right now if not for both of them. Thanks Jon!

OLD THRASH BASTARD

I was quite amused to see a new album with MASTER'S HAMMER released towards the end of 2009, not quite sure what to make out of that album but I was keen on hearing what Franta had to say about everything. After so many years of silence the world was surprised to see a new MASTER'S HAMMER in late 2009, why did you think that now was the right time to unleash a new album?

- Silence is fitting term, not just for Silenthell. For long years, I focused on typography and teaching among other silent activities. I was desperate for change. Last year I quit my job at the Academy in Prague and moved to countryside where I build my own studio recently. The inspiration came from various directions, we used to travel a bit, drink and smoke, and suddenly, when all impressions get stronger, we lost control over it, as painful constipation meet the point to switch into disengaging diarrhoea. Some rumors came across to our ears that we're heading towards re-union, which was not true then several bootlegs provoked us to do something real, our minds, already overwhelmed by senility, started to produce certain bizarre pictures. We've had a long party here in studio, recording true stories which really happened to us. Martin painted 1 m big pictures for the front and back cover.

Have MASTER'S HAMMER been reformed before and you kept silent about it?

- No, except for occasional pub meetings, and they were usually pretty loud.

The new material, when was it created and is the song writing process different now than back in the day?

- That's simple: all lyrics and music were completely invented and written during September/October 2009, except for "Bodhi" which is dated February 2008, in Bihar, India. Writing is always the same: I got an idea, someone rolls a good green, I open my laptop and write it down then I read it, Vlasta and others comment it. Many shallow ideas had to go, as you can surely imagine.

You have a lot of songs that are in the typical MASTER'S HAMMER vein but as the album goes on there is also a bit more unusual tracks. What influenced those stranger tracks?

- To me, those "unusual" ones seem more natural, whereas old good Metal things are kind of conventional, but I love all of them. We hate repeating and self copying, although the old demos are still deep in my heart, I'm not sentimental at all. I listen to weird music now, don't wish to know what... Find "Florin Salam" on YouTube, he's a king!

Do you follow any Metal bands today, do you know what is going on in the Metal scene?

- Yes, UMBITKA rules! Great Czech band. However, I can imagine what's on in the word of Metal music, I don't care so much.

How much attention do you put towards your lyrics? Does it bother you that a lot of people probably don't have a clue what you are singing about?

- Lyrics are always the most important part of our music. Sometimes, I should make a good English translation to all my texts, I promise. At the moment I can indicate that Mantras are about Czech and Indian countryside, people, beer brewing, card playing, booze, some hint of hindu-satanism, death, fun, vomiting, etc, no hate, no "serious" subjects, except for the last strictly personal "Epitar" where I ask my friends to put my remains burned into Ganga river.

What does it mean for you to be from the Czech Republic? There is definitely something eastern European about your sound....

- Maybe, and most probably it's okay that we're somewhat different, authentic. An east-southern branch of perverted black-brown-funky-metal?

Of course there is a new version of "Jama Pekel" from your debut, and since new material doesn't seem to be a problem why do you re-record this?

- We love frogs roaring at night walking from a pub back to studio, I sing with them. "Jama Pekel" is Vlasta's favourite song, although he joined the band years after it was composed, he called for the disco-theme almost at the end, just before my homo-guitar solo.

The Polish band BEHEMOTH has done a cover of that, what's your thoughts on that? Or bands covering MASTER'S HAMMER in general?

- Yes, they polished it very well, especially with Big Boss's vocal! Overall, I like the MASTER'S HAMMER tributes records, I do jokes that I don't need to play, I have many bands around the world doing it for me.

A fact in life is we all grow older, getting different priorities in life and things are just different. Why is it that you think you can create good enough material so many years later under the form of MASTER'S HAMMER?

- I don't want to do good things, I just enjoy the freedom to have fun and make pleasure to my old band members, no matter if anybody likes it or not.

Do you feel like you are getting a brand new audience now or is it mostly older fans being interested you think?

- Two weeks ago I met a couple of nice metal-dressed girls born in 1988, in the year when our second demo was out. They liked "Mantras" too, (and they could drink very well). Yesterday, me and Monster were in local FM hard&heavy radio interviewed, and we could notice some listeners' e-mail questions to the moderator like "hey, who's the band playing right now? It's nice, I didn't know it before..." I see the point of your question, but we never counted with our audience's taste. There are many bands who don't care as well, they do their painful music - that's the nature of underground.

Master's Hammer

Your third LP was the somewhat controversial "Slagry" album and many rumors surrounded that release. Like, this was just a way to get out of the contract with OSMOSE, is that really true? If it is how where you approaching making that album? And was it worth it to get away from OSMOSE? (I do think the album has some solid tracks....)

- No exactly. We left OSMOSE 14 years after the release of "Slagry". That was quite breaking album for us, we liked to get rid of Metal cliches. It's coming back to us up to now, we've had a great time in 1995, OSMOSE was generous to us, so I don't need to tell any sensational details about our deal termination. The benefit goes doubtlessly to fans - they will get only authentic stuff from us. I personally feel much better to be independent, we have everything under our control now.

Speaking of the early album, who is it that has the right to publish them? Do OSMOSE still own the rights or have the rights gone back to you?

- I can only say that nobody will release nothing without our approval anymore.

Besides the albums you also have a pretty impressive back catalogue as far as demos goes. You put up more or less everything on the net for free downloading. I am pretty sure it would be a market for this also to be released on CD or vinyl. So, eventually this must happen, right?

- Right. Next spring, after our return from India, we'll start to work on it. Vinyls and C's. Someone would definitely do it for all those faithful fetishists. Why not us?

Being a active band with a new album out, isn't it somewhat frustrating to see people almost more interested in your past releases?

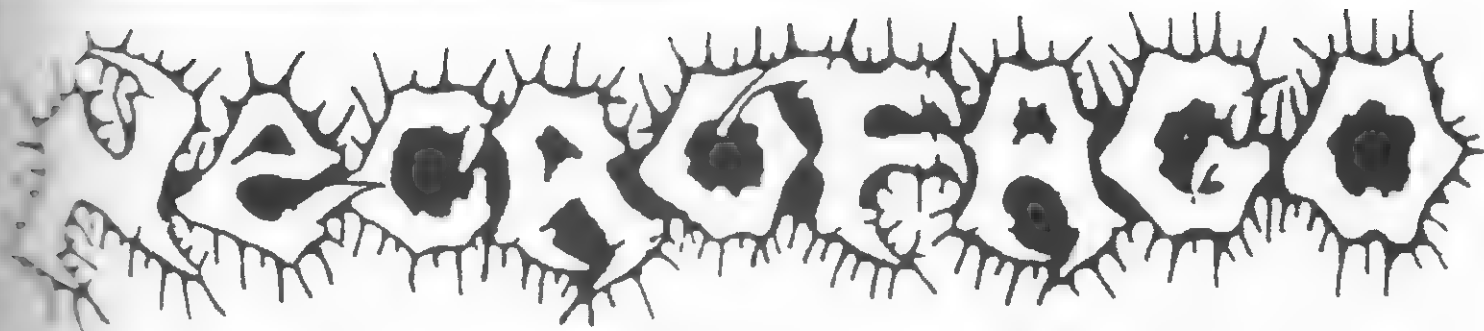
- Maybe, but I don't mind, last week we picked up another 500 Mantras CD's from the factory, 'cause we ran out of them 3 weeks after the release.

Do you feel there is something you can achieve musically now that you could not in the past?

- Yes, perfect sound is standard now with all those boring superb plug ins and synths, but I dream of something raw, just put cheap cassette recorder in the middle of rehearsal room, again.

What is your greatest memory concerning MASTER'S HAMMER? - Drunken Necrocock on stage once didn't noticed his cable went suddenly off his guitar, proceeded unplugged to the end of song - people loved

him



Brutal Mutilation

ANTI-GOTH 177 LP/PIC LP/CD

COMING SOON ON NUCLEAR WAR NOW PRODUCTIONS

Banda de DEATH METAL oficialmente formada nos fins de 86 por DEATHVOMIT (Vocals/Rhythm Guitar), POSTMORTEM (Lead Guitar), ROTTEN (Bass) e ROTTING CORPSE (Drums), todos com o ideal de fazer um som bem fudido, com influências de um FUCKIN DEATH METAL. Com esta e unica formação começaram os ensaios, e no começo fizeram duas musicas intituladas "BESTIAL CURSE" e "PREACHERS OF DOOM", bem no estilo. Em junho de 87 deram seu primeiro show em franca, junto ao BESTIALWAR; conseguiram ficar firmes no palco e teve boa aceitação entre varios bangers ali presente, onde agitaram direto com as duas bandas. Agora começa-se um novo ensaio levado bem a sério, compondo novas musicas e dando o maximo de força nos ensaios. Breve pretendem lançar um fudido Demo Tape e algum outro trabalho que esteja ao alcance, e começarem a fazer uma boa divulgação no Brasil e no exterior, para que breve possam começar a dar novos shows mostrando a garra do DEATH METAL no país.

DeathVomit
Vocals/Rhythm Guitar

PostMortem
Lead Guitar

Rotten
Bass

Rotting Corpse
Drums



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ROTTEN POSTMORTEM ROTTING CORPSE DEATHVOMIT

Hey, here's some more fuzzing about Metal....KK interviewed by E.
In the good old days of the Aztec reign, young women were decapitated while dancing in honor of the great goddess of corn, Chicomecoatl. It was supposed to be a representation of the reaping of corn. You just returned from your South America/Mexico tour in a limo, how are they keeping things up down there?

- Well, first off the limo was but one all too quick day in the US. In regards Metal, it seems to be fucking killer to me. The lap of the Gods so to speak. In terms of religious devotion...it seems to me to be a mix of Catholic idolatry and stupidity and sometimes mixed with the religion of the defeated original inhabitants of that continent. I took an interest in their de la muerte 'cult' down there, but upon a little research found it to be little more than what's mentioned above. Interestingly it's a saint favored by criminals. It follows the usual religious route of making offerings and asking for favors in return. Well I believe it may actually be 'demanding' of favours.

The wolf has since many years been a central figure in DESTROYER 666. Has your view of it changed since you started using it or is it still the same symbol to you as it was back then?

- Well, my understanding of it has naturally changed from almost 20 years ago. And to be clear, I've primarily only expressed one side or aspect of it in D666 lyrics and imagery due to the nature of Metal music. It would be inappropriate and no doubt misunderstood by most to cover the whole gamut of instincts and lessons to be learned from the lycanthropic experience. I've also come to accept its limitations to myself and its unsuitability for many people. I once naively believed that many could benefit from experimentation with the process. I no longer believe that to be the case, nor even wish it to be so.

With that in mind, what are the characteristics of the wolf that represent Destroyer666 today?

- A self contained pack, with a leadership that changes depending on the strengths and weakness of the individuals at the time. I have to be careful here, because more often than not, what folks deign the wolf to be are merely medieval prejudices, and others preconceived ideas about what it embraces may well be contrary to mine. What I gained from that whole experience was far more varied and rewarding than the usual stereotypical projections of humans. Having said that, one of the ironies of Metal is that the nature of the music lends itself to such an interpretation, and I'm guilty of it at times myself. You could say to attempt anything else would be pretentious and betray a lack of understanding about our role in the world.

One of the song titles on the new album "Defiance" is "Human all too human". It gives an impression of someone who puts his value in things greater than human race. What are those things to you? Are you a religious man?

- No I'm not a religious man. Religion to me is a way of injecting meaning into the world. It's a way of understanding the universe and its apparent indifference to our lot. It's an explanation of what's happened, what will happen and your part in that happening. Every single religious movement is the same in that regard. A medium for connection. My worldview and circumstances don't require me to believe in Gods or their plans. That's not to say I'm not for the spiritual experience. The song in question pertains more to my inclination to tragedy and drama, whether in verse, song, film and history. And my eventual, and perhaps inevitable, feelings of contempt for such anthropocentric self infatuation. It was merely a thought or maybe something much more vulgar a 'feeling'.

Apart from the wolf, the staff of Hermes is another frequently used symbol of yours. Hermes was a god of magic and a link between the human and the divine, do you see Destroyer as a representation of that archetype?

- Not particularly no. In fact the symbol for me was my way expressing the coalesced dualism of the Gnostic figure Abraxas. In my youth I indulged the common western habit of 'religious and cultural cannibalism'. I think that's the correct term. That is, to 'cherry pick' the things you 'like' from history and to take them out of context of their respective religious/cultural context. Its like a buffet of spiritual choices. The 'New-Age' and 'Paganism' movements are particularly indulgent in this practice. But I see it with almost all modern religious or esoteric movements. The downside of this habit is its meaning is often only relevant to the individual and often open to misinterpretation, thus leaving no culturally significant basis for growth. The vacuum of western society is usually filled by materialism, and those who attempt to construct things outside of society's norms have a large task ahead of them. A task requiring an almost super human vigilance. Off course there are physconauts who do attempts such lofty feats, and they are worthy of inquiry. Are the Gods are the only escape from a falling materialist culture? That's a question. I think if DESTROYER were to embrace any archetype it would that of the link between the Beast and Spirit.





'Then 'religious and cultural cannibalism' built most of the worlds religion and cultures I guess? Would you prefer if people aligned towards just one religion, one god, one symbol, ein reich etc.? If so, to whom? The Devil?

Correct, but I think the process was far more gradual and natural, in that a culture would generally borrow from its more successful neighbours, or convert to a conquerors beliefs. That is far removed from taking bits n pieces from religions from every corner of the world. This usually takes them out of context, and places undue importance on what may have been relatively minor roles in their natural setting. It also lends itself to misinterpretation. A simple example off-hand: Its common in primitive cultures to send the young men alone to live off the land for a period of months, then return a man. Now to take that one little piece and apply it to your average western 18 year old, with no previous hunting, survival experience would surely kill him. It's an admirable idea, taken out of context becomes little more than romantic madness. It's only a very simple and obvious example, but the same principle applies for all 'borrowing' from foreign cultures. Look, I'm not saying this cherry picking is 'bad' per se, only that it is prevalent the last 40- 50 years and is prone to the above mentioned faults. As for worshipping the devil, well as a personification of evil and evil often being a subjective transitory abstract concept I'm not sure that would have long term appeal. Just look at how quickly LaVeys form of ego indulgent Satanism has become the norm, and was almost enshrined by the 'yuppies' albeit without all the religious trappings. I view this as a superficial form of what LaVey was 'preaching'. Nevertheless it showed that society caught on with what was once considered radical. Anyone for Black Metal band/imagery in movies or advertising? We can see this in Metal especially, a medium which thrives on shock value. One day its enough to worship a Satanic figure, 10 years on, one must proclaim aloud that they worship this figure, then its adulation for tyrants and despots, then for rape, then for anything else harmful to humans, 10 years on some drug abuse is the most evil and taboo busting act one can commit, and then some that only some kind of spiritual death beyond our own personifies 'true' satanic doctrine (whatever that means),...and so on and so on. I just wonder how long it is before pedophilia becomes part of some bands shock tactic to gain attention in an increasingly jaded, numb and numbed world. Tho' I think that for most this will remain a due to it being linked to our animal instinct for survival. To make it scary for my Satanically minded friends, I'm not against esoteric study and practice, but as for rhetoric, dogma and superstition, that I find laughable. This preoccupation with things being 'sinister' I also find absurd. If something is attractive and/or useful to me it loses all connotations of being 'evil' or of being somehow 'sinister'. These are terms for prosecutors and priests.

Do you think Metal has a possibility of growing stronger and more potent, or has it reached it's roof when it comes to how much it can deliver?

If I understand you correctly you have a romantic vision of the power of music and probably art in general. I believe this to be partly an illusion of the pop-culture movement of the last 40 years. Music will always have the power to move people. But to make them move their arse into action? I don't know. I think greater forces are at work that inspires such things. It is powerful emotive music. And in an age that's been led to believe that what you feel is of utmost importance that counts for something. Yet other ages to talk of one's feelings was often considered to be feminine and weak. It was considered 'surrendering to the passions'. The province of children and women. But since the late 1960's these things are considered to be 'good'. Metal has inherited that idea in large portions I believe. And it is this that gives us the illusion of effect. I also once believed that music and revolutionary thoughts and actions were inextricably linked, but history shows us that its environmental circumstances that lead people to action, then comes the Bard and his songs. Modern artists in general are too narcissistic to see this. As a culture we are so drunk on what we 'feel' and thus, those things that make us feel; music being one of them, that we make it out to be something much more than it is. What is it that all art and entertainment does?, it makes folks feel different. It can turn regular Joes into megalomaniacs. Thus we see those with a religious inclination who are drawn to Metals quasi- religious trappings soon tire of it, and move onto other deeper studies. Luckily for many, they seek no greater solace than Metal culture and need look no further. It is a great place to spend some time in my view. As for 'more' potent? For me POSSESSED's "Satan's Curse" is potent and PRIMORDIAL's "Empire Falls", if bands can simply maintain that kind of potency I'd be more than satisfied.

I think a 'romantic' and 'narcissistic' view on the magic of music is almost a necessity for creating Heavy Metal.

- Your right it is necessary. One or the other.

What would Metal or art in general be like if artists were not allowed to think they had something of importance to say and deliver?

- Metal would be as vacuous as pop music is. But I think we're overstating just how many Metal bands feel they have anything to say. Some are just great riff writers and song makers. Great singers who, for while at least, make you believe in whatever it is they're singing. Let's face it, it's the love of the riff, the beat, the feel of the song, which is why it's so hard to make anything political or belief driven in Metal music. We are all too ready to cast aside beliefs and ideals to be able to listen to a band for the feeling we get from hearing them, it's a narcotic and I'm adjusted to that. How many actually stopped listening to JUDAS PRIEST when Rob gone thrown out the closet? How many stopped listening to SARCOFAGO when it was rumored that Wagner was a born again? Who stopped listening to VENOM when they said that their Satanism was a joke?

Doesn't all powerful art in a way rely on that very conviction?

- Powerful art is in the eye of the beholder. One of them would need some romanticism at least. Either the artist or the beholder.

And if you can relate to greater forces being at work, you should also be able to relate to that they have their means through which they act, such as artists?

- The artist should then accept his role as a messenger and act accordingly.

What part in the history of DESTROYER 666 still gives you a vicious grin?

- The fact that we have got this far playing music that was never flavor of the month. D666 was never part of a movement or genre or scene, apart from the local Melbourne Metal scene which wasn't any one style. Tho' we were sometimes mistakenly wrapped up with the Euro retro Thrash scene of the late '90ies, I quickly redirected the music away as much as I could. Which resulted in the "Phoenix Rising" album. About as big a departure from Thrash as we could muster at the time. Ha ha

What is the urge that makes the spirit of DESTROYER 666 live on, and how long do you see it being upheld?

- Having something more to say. I think the great hiatus between our last 2 releases was in part due to me having little more to say. Cynicism and skepticism had a negative effect on my creativity. I know Metal is 99% about the music, no matter what many Black Metalers choose to believe, without good music, the greatest lyrics will go unread AND likewise with good music, the shittiest lyrics will be read. One of the ironies of our medium. And now perhaps I show my naiveté, I still believe that extreme Metal has a great opportunity to actually say something, an opportunity not afforded many other styles. Tho' we see the left wing AND right wing politically minded trying to determine what is acceptable and what is not, even in extreme Metal these days. We can still touch on subjects not visited by other more mainstream musicians. To waste that opportunity reduces Metal to the level of pop music. Meaningless vacuous lyrics, albeit with heavy music. And as said above, this does not detract from the listening pleasure at all (and some of my fave bands have crap/and/or meaningless lyrics) BUT, it does not add anything either. They're like easy women, they bring little to the discussion, but they're fun when you drunk.

What band do you think is the best example of one that brings both food for thought and listening pleasure?

- PRIMORDIAL, SABBAT (UK), RAZOR OF OCCAM, I think Pete Helmkamp has written some admirable stuff over the years, I'm sure there's a few more I can't think of right now. SIGURBLÖT have written things that I like to reread. The "Ruins of Beverast" lyrics look interesting. As for bands with intent, well that list is a little longer, but my first thought, despite I think, quite a bit of opposition to it, would be DISSECTION's "Reinkaos". I found Jon's earlier lyrics to be little more than dark fantasy tales, but I think on "Reinkaos", He achieved a brilliant mix of conscientious research, practice and honest intent. Masterfully written and executed. I think it would be fair to say that even those who don't follow his religious convictions would agree with me on that.

Last question; who do you think will die first on the WATAIN/D666/tba tour?

- Whoever gets in our way.

Defiance

Pagan Altar

The NWOBHM movement brought many musicians to form bands and release music on their own. This brought of course all sorts of styles due to having no record labels telling you what to do. Of course, there was IRON MAIDEN, ANGEL WITCH, DIAMOND HEAD, SAXON, etc... but deep in the underground laid a dark monster that did not wish to follow the norm. This entity was called PAGAN ALTAR and was disregarded by the Metal music press of the time, due to various reasons. Bootlegged numerous times, their demo was available only if you really dug far in the Metal ground... until 1998, where it was properly released as "Vol. 1" thru the band's own label ORACLE RECORDS - following the great D.I.Y. NWOBHM tradition. PAGAN ALTAR has then reformed in 2004, and released the mighty "Mythical & Magical" in 2006. I can seriously say that they are the best eighties band that has done a comeback nowadays. Read on to find out more about their history, and next steps!

*Interview partially published in Morbid Tales #6.

First of all, tell me... you've had many line-up changes in the past few years. Can you let us know how it is going right now? Can you properly introduce the members and tell us how things are moving these days?

T. - Hi Annick, it's nice of you to ask us, we are quite overwhelmed as usual that anyone would be particularly interested in what we are getting up to, somewhat different to how things used to be I must say! As I know you are aware even up to a few weeks ago our line up had changed yet again. This time it was getting in a new drummer in preparation for our short tour of Finland. As luck would have it we found an old friend of ours: Ian Winters, nicknamed 'The Bear', that we had lost contact with years ago. He is an really excellent sticks man and has been playing drums for thirty years so certainly knows what it's all about! Ian is a very powerful drummer and a larger than life character and so suits the band really well. In the few weeks he has had to learn the material from scratch... I cannot believe the progress he has made and has more or less nailed a live set with weeks to spare, something I never thought possible. In addition he is even taking over the harmony vocal duties as Al usually forgot to come in anyway but that will give us another dimension as well. We were very close to canceling the Finland tour, as I couldn't see us ever putting it back together in time but everyone has pulled together and we have managed it! Weekends have been used up with rehearsing to put the live set back on track so any thoughts of getting some much needed recording has gone out of the window but we have also been integrating a couple of new ones in at the same time. This will give us a chance to play them properly and iron them out before finally recording them for the next album. We also have enlisted Luke Hunter on guitar and in the couple of gigs he has played with us he has certainly got his act together. We have now been able to augment most of the old PAGAN ALTAR songs from a recording point of view far more now than we ever could in the past, as the equipment we have now is far superior! From a live perspective though we needed to get a reasonable facsimile of what was presented on record transferred to on stage and so the need for the other guitar became paramount, as good as Al is I don't think he could play two guitars at once. Al and Luke on the same stage together has given us a new perspective in regard to reproducing a reasonable facsimile of the recorded material in a live situation. They certainly compliment each other well so we can now look forward to playing songs that were out of the question before for one reason or another. The double lead works extremely well as does all the lovely little runs and lead sections that Luke puts in that fit very well within the framework of the songs. It leaves Alan free from finger picking duties etc and lets him concentrate more on playing those searing leads of his. When going into rhythm mode, Luke is extremely solid and adds a lot of punch and drive to the middle and from a vocal perspective that makes my job so much easier! It seems funny that although losing a band member feels like a regressive step initially as you have to go back three paces before you can go forward again PAGAN ALTAR as an entity itself has actually progressed musically and moved on each time this has happened! I feel I must add that along with the addition of the two musicians I have mentioned, there is of course Diccon on bass who has added a considerable amount of energy into the proceedings and we are lucky to have such outstanding virtuosos as these three within PAGAN ALTAR! The one thing with this band, although it has had its fair share of negativity in some aspects, has been the standard of the musicians we have had with us and we have always been lucky in that department. When Trev left we thought how hard it was going to be to replace him and we scoured every corner looking for a bass player of the same calibre and standard and then Diccon was recommended to us and that was it, it just fell into place, perfect. His attitude towards the music is first rate, as it is with all three of them, they will always put what is best for the music first and consequently spend a lot of time perfecting sections to make them add the extra feel, subtleness or drive to fit particular scenarios within the various songs that make them work better as a finished article. Diccon plays the bass with a lot of feel and passion and is always looking to improve his input and invariably comes up with a telling bass line that moves the instrument to another dimension. On drums, Ian is dream to work with, very particular in what he does and is just what PAGAN ALTARs music needs to work. Rock solid when it needs to be, fluent and thunderous when required and then subtle and thoughtful for the quieter sections and he is a master at it, certainly one of the best drummers Al and I have ever worked with and we have known some 'good uns'! You could set your watch by him in the morning and then check to see if your watch was gaining or losing time in the evening? I have always considered that the whole feel of PAGAN ALTAR songs and the strength of their conviction emanate from the drums and that department has now been well and truly sorted! Luke, Diccon and Ian are beginning to lock in very well together as a unit and that gives Al and I the freedom we need to weave in and out with the melodies and leads, couldn't have worked out any better really

Correct me if I'm wrong, but right now you are recording a new album that will be called "Never Quite Dead"... can you tell us a bit more about it? I know it was originally recorded as a demo in the old days, but was almost completely destroyed. Are you guys keeping it exactly like it was, or are you re-working the songs?

A. - Well it was really a live album that went a bit wrong. It's a long story but we scraped it mainly because we weren't happy with it and by the end of us trying to patch it all up it really wasn't that live any more.

T. - Everything has been jumbled about now because CD's are obviously twice the length of the old vinyl's and so most of the material has consequently been used up in producing double albums etc! It doesn't matter particularly as Al and I are quite happy completing some old ideas we had, putting in a couple of original ones and also writing new material! As you know we do like albums to follow a theme and 'Never Quite Dead' is no exception and is actually still the same in essence to the original idea except that it probably now describes us as well!

Have you been working on completely new songs? If so, can you describe us in which vein it will be?

A. - We wrote quite a bit of the new album from about 2004 when we were recording "Lords of Hypocrisy" and some around mythical as well.

T. - The idea behind the "Never Quite Dead" album is that although some things appear to be dead on the surface underneath they are still alive and kicking, something I find quite intriguing. It actually allowed me to finally finish the "Judgement of the Dead" trilogy that I have wanted to do for years! The songs are actually all in the wrong order; we recorded "Judgement of the Dead" as a demo even though "March of the Dead" had been written long before and we were mulling over "The Rising of the Dead" which is the fore runner to both of them when the band ceased to exist years ago so it was left unfinished until now! I have used different scenarios of the same theme with all the songs on the album for instance "The Ripper" which is obviously about that great money spinning institution Jack the Ripper but not the slash nonsense, it is more about the real reason behind the White Chapel Murders and the fact that the Ripper is still alive today, in a different form maybe but never the less still there, ask Al Fayed! The great undead are depicted in the "Dance of the Vampires" that musically hopefully conjures up the vision of the French aristocracy in all their finery dancing a minuet before going out on a blood binge as in the film of the same name, for any that cant visualise it there is a clip of the dance sequence on YouTube! For other more 'close to home' subjects like feelings you thought were dead only to be awakened again inspired our one and only love song "Kismet" and that has been around for years! The "Danse Macabre" is new and self explanatory, great fun to write and with the odd timing and changes of rhythm that Al and I like to use! "The portrait of Dorian Grey" is also new and very NWOBHM and is built on a parallel fourth dimension that exists behind a mirror reflecting your real soul in death that is only visible if you follow certain procedures. There is also a short intro type song called "After Forever" that I wrote in the seventies about a dying man looking back on his life and the regrets he had regarding the choices he'd made throughout his life and consequently didn't make the most of what he had when he had the chance! We have tried, as we always do, to achieve an album that although linked by its concept still varies greatly in it's musical content that hopefully reflects and transmits the way I feel about each given scenario!



Terry, you've had open-heart surgery a few years ago... what had happened exactly? Has it affected you musically, besides slightly delaying the recording of *Mythical & Magical*?

T. - Won't dwell on it too much only to say that never having been in hospital before only to wander in carrying a bunch of grapes, bananas, box of chocolates or a smile it came as quite a shock. Apparently I had Aortic Stenosis that is the calcifying of the Aortic valve in the heart and mine was knackered although I didn't know it until I collapsed! I am now the proud possessor of Titanium one, I went in like Peter Pan and came out like the crocodile...ticking! It did take a lot longer to get over the operation than I thought which delayed things a bit and the drugs made me very Zombified for quite sometime afterwards and I couldn't really do joined up talking! I had a lot of trouble remembering things and had to read words to songs I knew backwards before the op! When we first started playing live I could not for the life of me remember "The Sentinels of Hate" and lost count of the times I fucked it up! I still struggle with stamina sometimes when playing live and get very tired, I also tend to run out of breath very quickly and can't hold notes anymore, not that I ever could much, but I am coming to terms with what I can't do and try to work round it! Seems odd to have been technically dead for sometime and the railway lines down my chest don't look too great but at least I am still alive! The drugs I have to take are a pain in the arse as I'm always forgetting them and they fuck me up big time, but there you go! The only positive thing it did musically though was to make me determined to go out and play live again, almost like being given another chance because if it wasn't for that operation I would be dead now!

This surgery seems to be part of a bizarre chain of unfortunate events has been following your career since the beginning. You have jokingly baptized it 'the curse of PAGAN ALTAR'. Can you please give us a few examples of that curse? Terry, you had mentioned in the past something about the affiliation with a certain ring. Can you enlighten us on that subject?

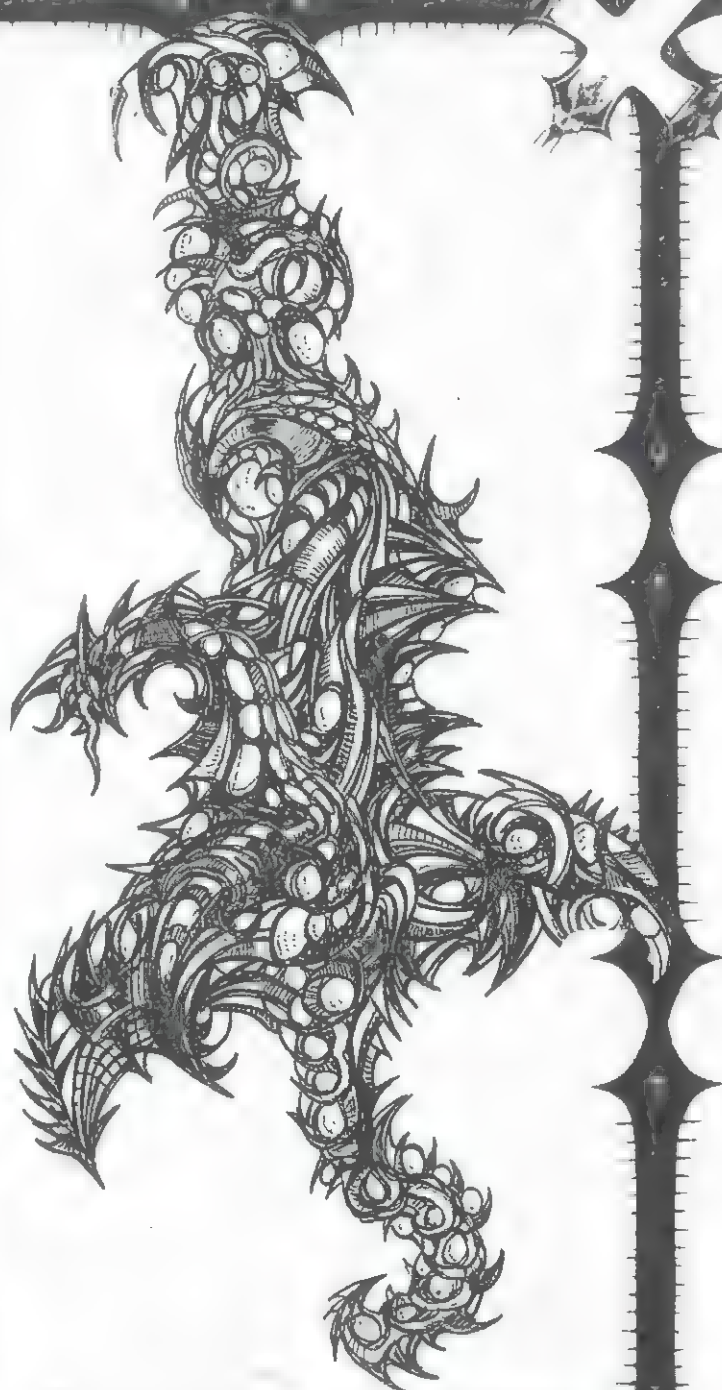
T. - The PAGAN ALTAR curse is that anything that can go wrong normally does for this band! At festivals for example, if there is going to be a problem with the equipment it's always us on stage when it goes wrong! Anything, everything and anybody can get fucked up with this band. At first, we thought it was just coincidence but now we are used to it and just put up with it. Even when Abbey Road were doing a single of ours some bright spark shot John Lennon and all their resources were diverted to cope with the massive demand for his material and our masters were farmed out for someone else to press and they promptly went bankrupt and so all their assets were impounded by the receiver including our masters! I could fill this magazine with occasions like the above but as I have said we just expect the worst now and it usually turns out that way! Do you regret getting this certain ring? Are you two superstitious or has these unusual events made you become superstitious?

T. - The ring came into my possession from a very dubious character; it was solid silver and had six flat sides all with different occult symbols on that could be worn either way up depending on your persuasion. Inside the ring were the inscriptions 'I am All in All and All through All' and 'He who understands all comprehends' the other way up obviously referring to the symbols on the outside. It could get very hot sometimes for some reason although I could never work out why. I initially assumed it was a Masonic ring but am not too sure now! When I decided to get rid of the ring I asked a friend Ian Winters who is now incidentally our new drummer to sell it on his market stall at the antique market in Tower Bridge road and on the same day he had two very expensive watches stolen. Since then Ian's marriage has failed he has gone through Hell in many ways, been institutionalised on numerous occasions and now the worst fate of all, he's playing drums for PAGAN ALTAR!!!

Hahaha! Let's hope he got rid of the ring by now! In any case, let's take a trip with the Time Lord to the late '70ies... You two played in a band called HYDRA. Not much is said about this band... what was it exactly? Was it a previous incarnation of PAGAN ALTAR or was it something completely different? When did the band start exactly?

A. - HYDRA was the forerunner to PAGAN ALTAR and some of the songs from the last two albums were from that time.

T. - The idea behind HYDRA was that it was many headed with regard to the variation within the music played. It had Chrissy Mendham on drums, Alan Knott on bass; someone called Simon on second guitar, Al on lead and myself on vocals. We wrote quite a few of the earlier songs with HYDRA and although they did change a bit once performed by PAGAN ALTAR they were basically the same! I remember we quite enjoyed HYDRA, it certainly was funny as some of the members were characters, especially Chrissy!



Back around 1978, you have recorded many songs including the ones found on the "Time Lord" MLP (which are actually some of my favourites) are there other unreleased songs from that time that were never published? Is the "Time Lord" MLP's "Black Mass" the only time where Alan appears as a backup vocalist?

A. - I did actually do some of the backing in "Judgement Of The Dead" and "Amadeus" on the album but only because no one else wanted to do it. I also do some of the backing live but I don't like trying to sing and play at the same time and I can only do it in certain places.

T. - There was a lot of recorded stuff hanging about for a long time, some was lost and some we unsuccessfully tried to put back together but the only ones that were of any real use were the very early ones that went into the "Time Lord" and "Vol 1" of course.

While recording the demo, you two apparently had the flu - hence Terry's 'nasal' sounding vocals. Strangely, you still have almost the exact same vocals nowadays. Did that flu always stick by... hence the mass intake of Fisherman's Friend's lozenges? Ha-ha! Just kidding. But seriously, what is your technique for singing? Which vocalists inspired you to sing in such an original way?

A. - We really did have bad colds at the time and the studio was full of tissues where we had been blowing our noses.

T. - It probably affected Al far more than me but it certainly didn't help as we couldn't breathe and the run up takes to the vocal recording was full of sniffing, coughing, sneezing, wheezing and laughing. The chant at the beginning took us about eight goes and should have been three times the length but with the four of us around one mic someone would burst out laughing so we left it at two! Yes, I still suffer with a bit of a nasal problem, probably the result of a misspent youth!!!!

The demo turned out to be "Vol. 1", which was put out officially by ORACLE RECORDS in '98. Did ORACLE start at that time - or was it present before? Who was active in the label and what did you distribute? Also, out of curiosity, why do you guys put no catalogue numbers? Vol. 1 was also released on wax by BLACK WIDOW in 2005. Why was the name changed to "Judgement of the Dead"?

A. - The original name was "Judgement of the Dead". It was changed when it all went to print by someone else and wasn't worth forking out another couple of hundred quid to get it changed back. That was the problem of us not having a computer at the time.

T. - ORACLE was originally meant to handle more than just PAGAN ALTAR although set up at just before the release of "Vol 1" initially to handle that particular CD and then we planned to recruit other bands and bring out their releases but the pressure to record more PAGAN ALTAR material was such that it took over everything. However, we do plan to release an album by MALAC'S CROSS in the not too distant future. This is a band that Alan formed after the demise of PAGAN ALTAR and incidentally the name MALAC'S CROSS is the place where they found the oracle in the book "The Sorcerer"! ORACLE RECORDS was put together as a record label to handle the recording and production side of things and ORACLE PROMOTIONS was set up to handle the merchandise and were initially run by Jen (Vocalist from MALAC'S CROSS) and Lynn respectively although both don't play too much of a leading role in them now as Lynn has taken over managing PAGAN ALTAR.

How many shows have you played in the first 'phase' of your career? How would you describe the experience of a PAGAN ALTAR gig in these early days?

A. - We were playing pretty regular at the time; there were plenty of gigs all over the country because of the NWOBHM craze. Although we didn't have that fast punky sound of some of the other bands, we were still making the right sort of noises.

What consisted of your stage act and trapping? Do you feel that you had to do these in order to be known?

T. - Not at all! To me, the music and stage act went hand in hand. The two are synonymous with one another as the visual aspects were an extension of the music and was allied to it as much as the lyrics. All stage work which has theatrical element to it, as long as it is well thought out and tastefully done, benefits the music - and from a live point of view, elevates it to another level. However, I do believe you have to be very careful how you use it and not to overstep the mark or it can look decidedly soppy. If the stage show or mode of dress as it were reflects the music and accentuates what it is trying to portray from a visual aspect then it can only be beneficial. It is only when it gets to the point of being OTT with no bearing on the musical content that it ceases to perform its primary function and loses its relevance! The attention of the observer is then centered on the visual effects and the music has to take second place, which is certainly not the way it should be, well not to my mind anyway! As for troubles its unbelievable just what can go wrong, we used to call them 'Gremilins' (It was way before the film of the same name came out by the way) But we just used to incorporate it in with whatever we were doing and bluff it out! One of the things that was always a problem though was the Death cloaks we used to wear, because the hoods were so large so as to cover our faces and the amount of smoke emanating from the coffin and 'Dougal' the smoke machine no-one could see a hand in front of their face, let alone find their way across a stage resembling a mine field with all the cables and Pyro's littered about!

Were the skulls you used on stage and in pictures real ones? Ha-ha, I'm so curious! I always wanted to own one.

A. - The skulls are plaster of Paris I'm afraid. I gave one away to our sound engineers son who was about 13 at the time and loved it. The other is still in our cellar with the coffin.

You have been offered to tour with the 'upcoming' METALLICA in the US... but had to pay for your own way there. Who offered you this? How did you guys react to this unusual offer? Who had offered it, their manager?

T. - A guy named Sam Kress the editor of WHIPLASH MAGAZINE phoned us at about 2am when we were asleep to tell us that he had spoken to METALLICA's manager and that this was an option if we wanted it but we didn't have a pot to piss in at the time and would have had to sell our PA to get the finances required and that certainly wasn't an option, it was all we had and without it we were knackered!

You have even played at a Gothic church, without the church administration knowing your lyric subject. How did that gig go? Did you guys get cut off when they heard your dark and satanic lyrics?

T. - Yes we did do a private gig in a Church hall we had hired once as it was the only place we could get and our attire, stage act, props and lyrical content went down like a lead balloon with the Burgers and Do Gooders who let themselves in to see what was going on and why they could hear it all the way down in Deptford! I can't think why! They were happy to take our money though! As a gig it went extremely well and was great fun but we were far too loud even though the hall was massive, there are some pictures of it in the bio somewhere if any-one's interested.



Have you had any religious complications regarding "PAGAN ALTAR" as a band name? I know that if you would have been a US band, there would probably have been fundamentalist Christians marching outside your shows...

T. - We didn't in England as far as I know, but the guy I mentioned before Sam Kress RIP certainly did and had some nutty religious woman having a go at whiplash's front door with an axe Screaming she had come to destroy this PAGAN ALTAR!

Can you talk us about the infamous Nunhead cemetery - where most band pictures were taken, and some lyrics were written? Why this cemetery in particular? Where can we find it exactly?

T. - Nunhead Cemetery is as close as you can get to a Hammer film set, you just have to look at its wonderful decaying grandeur and monumental tombs (The Sentinels Of Hate) and the broken grave stones in the undergrowth to see where that particular song came from! Nunhead cemetery is between Brockley and Peckham and covers about seventy-eight acres so not small by any standards. It is a classic Victorian OTT time warp that fell into decay because of lack of funds in the twentieth century and although it has now been tidied up it is still very Gothic and forbidding. If anyone comes to London, Nunhead has a direct rail link with London Bridge station so is very easy to get to and I would encourage anyone with a morbid nature to visit it, you will not be disappointed, give yourself a lot of time though as it takes some getting round and there are many paths leading off! Incidentally, the last surviving member of the charge of the Light Brigade is buried in there! Another place where pictures were taken was a satanic church in Deptford. I honestly didn't know there were such churches in '81. Can you inform us a bit about it? Do you have many pictures left out of that photo session?

A. - Well it was a cellar under a bookshop called 'The Church of Occult Science' but it looked like something out of a Hammer horror film. There were a lot of books on every kind of occult diversity you could imagine. We had quite a few photos taken down there but we thought they looked a bit contrived and just a tad corny and soppy so we never used them, we weren't very good at all that 'Look how Evil I am' nonsense.

PAGAN ALTAR split up because certain band members lacked interest, right? Do you think that it was because you didn't have enough presence in the music press of the time?

A. - I had had enough by then, we were playing to half interested audiences who really didn't care who was on! John had disappeared back to Israel for 6 months and came back a week before a gig in which we sounded terrible and I just didn't want to do it any more after that so I joined XYZ with our present drummer Ian Winters in 1984 and went to Wales. This is not the U.S XYZ which was formed a lot later.

Have you tried to revive it before the late '90ies? What pushed you all to restart the band, 20+ years later?

T. - No, we had never tried to resurrect it before as we thought it was long since dead and buried it was only people being ripped off by the bootlegs that made us put it back together!



What do you think of the current Doom Metal scene? I am sure that back in the early '80ies it wasn't really called that... when did you first hear that label, and who associated you with it? Also - out of complete curiosity, how did you label bands like Black Sabbath back in the day?

T. - At the offset we saw ourselves first and foremost as a Heavy Rock band with no ideals of type or genre so as far as I was concerned we still were! The term Metal came later as did Doom and I remember Ozzy moaning in an interview about all the different titles for whatever and that as far as he was concerned it was just Heavy Rock the same as we did. We just wrote and played music we liked and didn't particularly give any real thought as to what category it came under or what anyone else was doing for that matter! The musical evolution of PAGAN ALTAR was just a natural progression that evolved within itself as is evident now from some earlier recordings that have been released. We were born on the cusp as it were between the Old School and the New Wave so perhaps different influences were unknowingly incorporated into the music, we certainly didn't try to sound like anyone else although if you use the same equipment and musical content similarities will obviously be drawn! **Alan, after PAGAN ALTAR broke up, you have taken part in all sorts of projects, including XYZ, MALAC'S CROSS. Can you tell us a bit more about it? I believe this was a band started up with your own sister on vocals, right? When was the band formed and how would you describe this kind of music?**

A. - I joined XYZ after PAGAN ALTAR. I had gone in the studio and did a session for them for their demo and knew the drummer Ian from when I was young. PAGAN was always so serious at that time and it just refreshing to have a laugh for a change. MALAC'S CROSS was the last of a series of names with different members. My sister joined after it became MALAC'S CROSS. I never even knew she could sing until she put down a demo for us. She is also a good songwriter, which has meant I have never had to go out of the family for lyrics. We were a rock band with a Celtic edge I suppose.

You have recorded in the past years "The Lords of Hypocrisy" as well as "Mythical and Magical". These two albums have had a tremendous impact on the Doom Metal scene, and have tuned many new head bangers to your mind-blowing albums. Honestly, did you think you would ever have reached these heights?

T. - Not in a million years, we were just happy to put out music we had spent a lot of time writing years ago and having thought it was dead were only too pleased to have the chance to resurrect it. It was very much a personal thing but we are so glad we bothered because at first we weren't going to and was just going to let it die after Vol 1 superseded the bootlegs!

Alan, you are a master of riffs and leads. A lot of people are missing the point of good song writing nowadays. What do you recommend to starting musicians? Do you have any inspirational techniques?

A. - Just listen to all styles music. If you just listen to say Doom, which is all you are going to come up with and there will be no variation. Sometimes it's good to incorporate as many different styles into what you are doing. It will give more scope to write in.

Are there any plans of releasing some kind of video documenting your live shows history? I know some old shows were recorded, but maybe some bits and pieces would be interesting to see...

T. - We did have a few goes at having videos done but they always seemed to go wrong for some reason although Videos were quite new then and people didn't realise that if you try to ram a good 3000 Watt PA system down one of those silly little microphones you would blow the bollocks out of it! When they did record it they missed the beginning anyway and that was the bit we wanted!

I know that fan clubs were the norm back in the 80's, but they are less common nowadays...you break this rule by having the great PAGAN ALTAR Templars fan club, which is a delight for us! Did you have a fan club in the beginning? What started this one, and how do you feel about it

T. - A fan club don't make me laugh, we only had people around us we knew really and the odd one man and a dog. People were too wrapped up in their own mainstream bands to give us a hearing or even a chance really; very different to the way it is now. I think it helps greatly as when people know your material as they will always sing along and it is a very emotional thing to hear people singing lyrics that you have written. I don't think I will ever get enough of that feeling and is certainly something I never thought I would feel or hear for that matter all those years ago. We can even hear them singing the lead breaks from on stage and Al always worries in case he slips up, as he knows they will know! One of the bands main achievements I feel is The Templars as I don't believe any other band has a more devoted group of people in their midst. I have terrible trouble with the word 'Fans' as I look on them more as friends and the whole band really enjoy their company when we meet up at gigs and festivals, they make it worth while regardless of which country we are in we always feel they are there with us. Just to see those red shirts in the front row is like having a two goal start and we always play to them, the rest of the audience can join in if they wish and are more than welcome but yes the Templars get us going...and everyone else it would seem, bless em! The Templars were the brain child of Themis Pamphilos in Greece which is where the whole thing started the second time round and the strength of the emotion in the welcome Al and I received when we visited there made us determined to put things back on the road again, I must say it was unbelievable and something we shall never forget!

You have played many shows and festivals in the last couple of years. Congratulatory! I wish I could have been to them all... ha-ha, but unfortunately I am not blessed with a thick wallet. Which ones were you favourites, and why? How do you like the live experience?

T. - We have really enjoyed most of the gigs and festivals we have done except for just a few in England believe it or not, although most of those we have done here have been fine but the reaction we get when we are abroad takes some beating. Al and I both like playing live as do the other members of PAGAN ALTAR. The only trouble is that you tend to do very little else and things like recording albums get put on the back burner. Every time we play it is a different experience, meeting people that have travelled for miles to see us is a great insight as to how the band is progressing and we never get tired of talking to people whether they liked us or not! Al and I still have trouble getting our heads around that and can't take it in as we still have the feeling in the back of our minds that people are not really interested which is, I'm afraid, a legacy from years ago when no-one gave a shit, it's hard to erase that!

What are you guys up to, nowadays - and what are the next steps with the band?

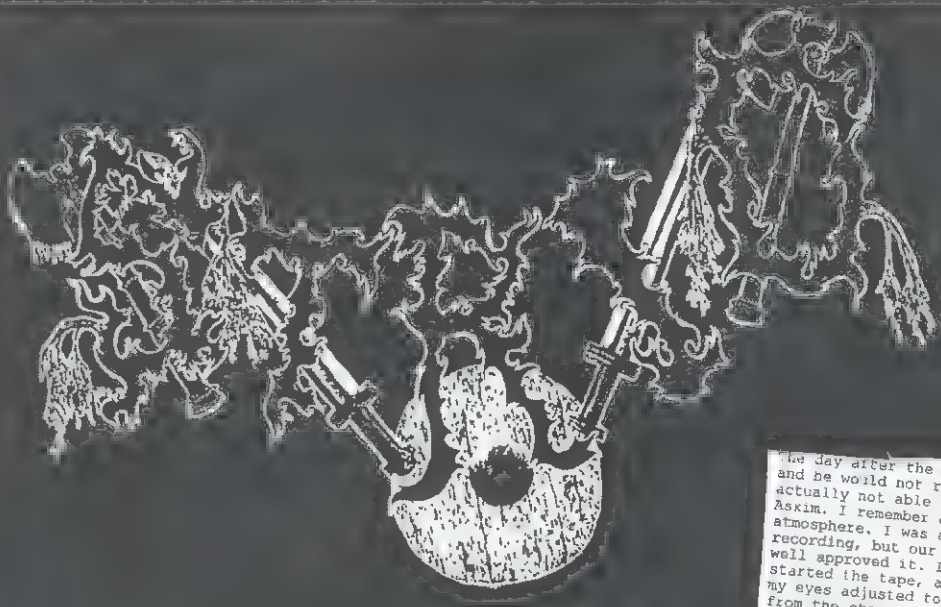
T. - Basically, at this precise moment we are getting our heads down with Ian the new drummer preparing for the Finland tour and then on to play Roadburn with Tom G Warrior and then to Lisbon in Portugal. For the next few months we have quite a heavy schedule but we are looking forward to it immensely. It certainly keeps the adrenalin going and if I am not mistaken the best is yet to come from PAGAN ALTAR as our new drummer is tailor made for us and is the kind of drummer we have always looked for, watch this space!

All right, the interview is almost finished; the last words are yours. Please close it however you wish!

T. - A big thanks to you from us all at PAGAN ALTAR and ORACLE for taking the trouble to put this interview together and I hope we haven't bored anyone shitless, Ha Ha! I would also wish to meet you at least one

more time before we turn it!





It is with great pride I sit down to write these words for SLAYER #20. Not only does SLAYER MAGAZINE represent to me the very first introduction to a lot of my favorite Metal-bands, but in my point of view has SLAYER MAGAZINE managed to keep its integrity through 20 years where the underground metal-scene has gone through some fundamental changes, and most participants has failed to do the same as SLAYER MAGAZINE; to keep its integrity, or they have simply disappeared. Therefore I will on behalf of STRID send our gratitude and hails to Metalion for both the past and this opportunity to participate in SLAYER #20.

What would become STRID was originally formed in 1990, under the name MALFEITOR. I was at the time not a part of the band, but as I've been told from that part of the bands shape was as I've experienced myself later; most of the bands shape was created in that period. Even though the music has changed quite distinctively since the beginning, the idea about the music has been more or less the same; to never compromise and to have the goal of creating the darkest music possible to the band. MALFEITOR released its first self-titled demo in 1991, recorded in the cellar of the drummer. It was released in 13 copies, and naturally it did not draw any attention at the time. Even heard now, almost 20 years after its recording, I objectively, as I was not a part of it, state that this demo had everything Black Metal was about at the time. In 1992, MALFEITOR released its second demo; "pandemonium", recorded in a studio, and it was released in 50 copies.

After the "pandemonium" demo, the band entered a period of changes caused by both maturing as persons and, I guess, being affected by the development in the scene. The band-name was changed from MALFEITOR to BATTLE and the band recorded its third demo; "End of Life". The change in music-style is obvious to the ones that know it. "End of Life" shows the band entering a darker state of mind using a more melodic yet melancholic and dark approach to Black Metal. It was after the recording of "End of Life" I was asked to join the band.

"End of Life" was released in very few official copies as well, but we did get a contract on a 7" with MALICIOUS RECORDS in Germany. By then we had started to create new music and in this period some turbulence within the band started to occur, which eventually resulted in the former guitar-player leaving the band. During this period the band changed its name to STRID, which is a Norwegian translation of the name BATTLE. In this period me and the bassist/singer, Storm, went into a frenzy of developing our approach to what we were doing, trying to catch the very essence of darkness into music. In the beginning of 1994 Storm and I went to the home-studio of the man behind another Askim-band, called INFLABITAN. Here we recorded a demo for the upcoming 7". The result has never been heard of many people, and today it is a great loss to me to say that this recording unfortunately is lost forever. As far as I remember, MALICIOUS RECORDS ever received this tape from us. Somewhere along the road for the last 15 years its original was lost. Even though, this recording made us certain that we were on the path we wanted to be, and sometime in the autumn of 1994 we entered Creative Studios in Sofienyr to record our 7". This session turned out to be a real nightmare as our technician was completely uninterested in the ambitious work of three teenagers. Many stories could have been told about this session, but the fact that Storm and I at one moment were seriously discussing if we should attack the technician he would probably says it all. We understood that attacking him would probably be the end of the recording, so we didn't. Thinking back of that session it is mostly with pleasure, as we in the end got satisfied with the result. I also made some memories which never will leave me, like the fact that the recording of the vocals were done with only one take. The darkness in the studio when Storm sang the lyrics for the two tracks can never be recalled in its true shape. The result is two songs that were released on the self-titled 7" in 1995 by MALICIOUS RECORDS.

The day after the recording of the 7", Storm went to the army, and he would not return until one month had passed. He was actually not able to listen to the songs until he returned to Askim. I remember us sitting in my room, in a dark sacred atmosphere. I was at the time myself satisfied with the recording, but our goals would not be achieved until Storm as well approved it. I blew out all the lights in my room as I started the tape, and by the end of the first song I looked up, my eyes adjusted to the dark, and through the dim red light from the stereo I saw tears running down Storms face, and we were satisfied.

I think the first 1000 copies were sold out only in a couple of months, but we did not care about it, as our intentions at this stage were only to create. The biggest problem was Storm being in the army, so working as a band was impossible. This way we entered even further into an individualistic way of creating music. During the next 6-9 months nothing much happened, except me working on the full-length alone more or less. I myself became extremely restless, with that much music, without being able to work it out properly, so I decided to leave the crowded several years in the north-western parts of Norway, on a farm in the mountains. Sometime in the late parts of 1994 I received a phone-call from Storm, where he told me he was just released from custody, because he had stabbed some lowlife with a knife. This incident led to him going to jail for 9 months, and it would be even more problems for us to finish composing the album.

Also, in this period, MALICIOUS RECORDS and Gerrit Welher showed his true face to us, lying and stealing, so the motivation to release music was dropping radically. As a band, STRID was at that moment probably already dead. What kept us together as a group, rather than individuals were the common ideas that were the basics for our music, our lyrics and our chosen way of life. We had sporadic rehearsals during late 1997 and early 1998. After recording the 7" our drummer left the band, and in 1997 we brought back the former guitar-player Lars and Sigmund from INFLABITAN on drums. This was the beginning of a period of some months where we had regular rehearsals, but at the time everyone involved was not really motivated to be in a band and to create music to release for

others to listen to, so it all faded away.

The band-members literary went in opposite directions because of conflicts which content is long forgotten, and for a couple of years I had no contact with Storm. In 2000 I felt that fulfilling the idea of STRID was something I had to do, and I contacted Storm regarding this matter. At the time he was working on his application for the Norwegian Academy of Art (Storm was as well a highly talented painter). He was depressed and felt more distanced to others then ever, but he agreed for us to breathe life back into STRID, he just had to finish his application. He never did, as he killed himself less than a month after.

Not only did I lose a brother, but also the other half of STRID. All plans for reuniting STRID died with Storm. Several years passed, and I left Norway for a long period, and I became more distanced to the scene than ever, until I was approached in 2006 by KYRCK Productions from Greece. Mr. Iannis Mantzoros made me aware about all the STRID-bootlegs circulating, and he convinced me to do an official re-release of all the material by MALFEITOR, BATTLE and STRID. The compilation was released in December 2007. All along since 2000 I've had a feeling that STRID was something I had to complete and getting involved with the release of the compilation grew on me. During a period of several months I decided that STRID would resurrect. To me this decision resulted in a lot of thinking where I had to recapitulate many of our former ideas. Not to the musical or lyrical aspect of the band, but among several things the degree of involving other persons to contribute. I was determined that by resurrecting STRID I would have to bring in new members, and at the time I had close to no candidates I would like to work with. Another year passed with STRID growing in my mind, while I tried to reconstruct most of the old material. Unfortunately a lot is lost. Not only of my own material, but also material from Storm that we had played earlier is lost or forgotten. The loss of several of Storms bass-lines is impossible to replace, and my words as the only thing that can try to describe the darkness and the complete despise of life Storm was able to summon with his music.

that years of contact with Mr. Iannis Mantzoros the
 operation entered a new dimension when I joined his band
 "ETERNITY". Becoming a part of another band and working with
 other people just gave me more energy and determination to
 correct STRID. In November 2009 I contacted the people I
 thought could be the right ones to be a part of STRID. First
 Lars from the original line-up was added as a second
 guitarist. Our relationship in the past had been filled with
 conflicts, but we agreed to bury them and to finish what was
 started almost 20 years ago. I had never any doubts about his
 skills as a composer and musician, and listening to his current
 material made me even more certain that I had the right person
 with me on guitar. Also, by bringing back the person that
 was the heart of the music for the first demo, "Pandemonium" and "End of
 Life" makes it easy to say that the circle is complete with me
 return to the band.

During our youth years in Askim, we always were a group of
 10-12 persons listening to black metal and living that life.
 The person that left Askim early and moved to Oslo was Vicotnik
 of IHS. In 2006 I discussed my thoughts regarding giving life
 to STRID with him. Then he offered me his help, and I've had
 him in the back of my mind all along. Finding a replacement for
 him as a bassist is something I did not find easy, both from a
 personal and a musical perspective. I knew Vicotnik is a great
 musician and as a person he would be able to contribute to the
 band with instantly understanding the concept and to create the
 dark atmosphere we try to summon. After listening to the bass
 Vicotnik did on the last CODE-album I was determined to offer
 him the place as a bassist in STRID. The fact that we share the
 same ideas about STRID on a musical level makes it natural to
 bring Vicotnik into STRID.

On winter solstice 2009 we started recording a demo in Askim,
 and this, the first recording session continued until the 1st
 of January 2010. It was a slow progress, but the result was
 promising, so during the spring of 2010 we met sporadically to
 continue the work, usually for a weekend, as I was still living
 outside Norway at that time. You might say we emptied us on
 these sessions, recording almost 90 minutes of raw material,
 and when summer 2010 arrived we decided to take a break to let
 things mature. The result of these recordings makes me confident
 that we are honoring the heritage of STRID the way I always
 wanted to, as we summoned our anger, darkest depressions,
 sorrows and miseries into music. Sometime the autumn of 2010 we
 will start the recordings for our first full-length which title
 will be "Endetid". This is a Norwegian word meaning "end of
 time", and the album could not have a more appropriate title
 regarding both the musical and lyrical concept. When, how and
 by whom the album will be released is still something we have
 not thought much about, but I would assume it is realistic to
 state that sometime in the second half of 2011 "Endetid" will
 be released.

Hail Metalism! Hail SLAYER MAGAZINE!

Ravn of Strid, 29th of August - 2010



Upcoming

Rituals

Celestial Bloodshed -
TBA CD/LP
Celestial Bloodshed -
Serpents Kiss 7"EP

Dødsengel - Ecstatic Horror 7"EP
Mare - TBA MCD
Dark Country - TBA

HONOUR

VALOUR

SACRIFICE

Available

Possessions

Min. Saito - Av Aske MCD/10"MLP

The Tail One Head - TBA 7"EP

Unbeing - III MC

Liturgia - Liturgia 12"MLP

Dødsengel - Dødsengel MCD

Dødsengel - Arkaik MC

Dødsengel - Mirium Occultum CD/2xLP

Sarath - Siste Indre DigiCD

Urfaust - Geist Ist Teufel CD

Urfaust - Drei Rituale Jenseits Des Kosmos MC

Urfaust - Verräterischer, Nichtswürdiger Geist MC

Urfaust - Einseidler MC

Urfaust - Geist Ist Teufel MC

Terratur

Possessions

Quorthon and BATHORY

An appreciation

I was as shocked as anyone when I heard about the sudden death of BATHORY's Quorthon at the age of 39. Thomas Forsberg was his real name, and he was found dead in his Stockholm apartment on Monday June 7, 2004, felled by an apparent heart attack. Never the most public of figures to begin with, Quorthon had naturally kept his any already diagnosed heart ailments to himself, and, like the band he single-handedly represented and transformed into a Heavy Metal legend, additional details remain sparse. The tributes, by comparison, were abundant and immediately started pouring in from all corners of the planet – Metallic and otherwise. And, as we raised a beer or two or five to toast Quorthon here in New York City earlier this year, Metalion and myself drunkenly agreed SLAYER MAGAZINE should post a tribute as well. This is it: part career recap, part review piece, part personal memoir – all of it intended as respectful and grateful homage to another rock and roll hero gone. Only don't expect it to end with one of those 'heavenly super group jams,' however, for as the following will show, not only will Quorthon be jamming in Valhalla, he'll probably be handling all the instruments himself!

First off, better to start this thing with an admission: I was something of a late arrival into the cult of BATHORY, relatively speaking. Oh sure, I remember checking out that austere packaged self-titled debut album in a dingy Milan, Italy record store called TRANSEX as early as 1985/86. But, someone told me they were VENOM photocopies and the cover sure seemed to second that opinion, so I probably spent my hard-won lire on another SAXON or RAVEN album – anything New Wave of British Heavy Metal. The truth is, BATHORY's first and second efforts (that being 1985's "The Return...") were in fact rather blatant VENOM wannabes, but they were really good VENOM wannabes, at that.

For me, any chances of hearing those BATHORY LP's were suddenly shot down when my family moved back to our hometown of São Paulo, Brazil, in mid-1986. I was 16 and desperate; leaving behind a bustling European Metallic metropolis to be exiled in what at first felt like a South American backwater, only a year removed from a 20-year span under military dictatorship. Thankfully, it didn't take long for me to discover Brazil's own, scarcely emerging Heavy Metal contingent: SEPULTURA, SARCOFAGO, KORZUS, DORSAL ATLANTICA, VULCANO, MUTILATOR, etc. But concerts were still few and far between (I saw all of four international Metal bands play live in the next three years) and what import records were to be found, I couldn't afford anyway. Hell, it was hard enough finding myself a copy of "Reign In Blood", never mind "Under The Sign Of The Black Mark"!!!

I vaguely remember hearing the odd BATHORY tune at this time – either played in São Paulo's only Heavy Metal record shop (WOODSTOCK RECORDS – yeah!) or on its only weekly Heavy Metal radio show (COMANDO METAL – yeah!), but it wasn't until KERRANG! MAGAZINE finally started being imported around 1989 that I actually had a chance to read something about the band. I can't remember many details, but the article probably discussed the "Blood Fire Death" record, and, it being KERRANG! definitely took a somewhat humorous, even dismissive angle to describe Quorthon's latest musical 'folly.' Funny how the joke was on them in the end, since, as we all know now, that 'folly' was in fact a groundbreaking release flying way over their heads.

Not that I had a fucking clue myself! Even though my interest had been piqued, I was still very much immersed in the glory of Thrash's 'Big Four' (plus TESTAMENT, EXODUS, and others) and the Floridian scene's (DEATH, ATHEIST, CYNIC et al) amazing displays of technical Death Metal to pay attention to a one-man Swedish band that never played live! How could any self-respecting band never play live?

Also – and this may sound crazy nowadays – to most Metal heads not living in Scandinavia or Continental Europe, raw, poorly recorded, unsophisticated Black Metal was still viewed as, at best, a freak occurrence, or, at worst, an actual blemish on Heavy Metal's sterling record. Even SEPULTURA sounded flawed to my ears until they went technical on "Schizophrenia". Black Metal had yet to be vindicated (and vilified) by the early '90ies Norwegian scene; VENOM were the unfair subject of weekly ridicule in KERRANG! (Which listed three of their now glorified albums among Metal's top ten worst of all time!); and BATHORY, their humble Black Metal beginnings still fresh in all of our minds, naturally fell into this wrongful consideration as well.

Then came the early '90ies great American Metal freeze-out! With the advent of grunge and the wrongful condemnation of all things Metal (based on the heinous misconception that cock rock bands like WARRANT and WINGER had anything to do with Heavy Metal) and we were shut out in the cold. BATHORY classics like "Hammerheart" and "Twilight Of The Gods" were rarely even released in the new world, far as I know, and Quorthon himself flirted with retirement at this time, first by compiling two volumes of the "Jubileum" retrospectives, and then by simultaneously releasing what was to be a final BATHORY salvo in 1994's "Requiem" and a very uncharacteristic (and un-Metallic) solo album. The latter seemed to confirm our fears that all Heavy Metal bands (FAITH NO MORE, ALICE IN CHAINS, SOUNDGARDEN, that closeted Metal head sellout fuckwad Billy Corgan, for instance) would have to take desperate measures and adapt to this horrifying new world in order to survive. But, in truth, Heavy Metal was back in the deepest underground, where, if you ask me, it should always remain. It's simply part of the genre's genetic make-up: to be the ultimate underdogs, the most hated of all.

As for me, (I know, ME, ME, ME!) I had coincidentally moved to the U.S. in 1994 to pursue my dream of working in the music business, only to find myself – after years of traveling to the U.S. and Europe to purchase records unavailable in Brazil – forced to search out import records again – AAAARRRGH!!! Thankfully, the Internet soon arrived to save, or at least facilitate, all of my CD-seeking wishes, and, provide renewed conviction that our 'sanguinary sect of worship' was in fact thriving and evolving in the underground, as usual. Finally free to indulge our darkest desires, free of market-minded concerns and commercial ulterior motives, and free of the illusion that widespread success would do Metal any good, the time was at last ripe for Black Metal originators like VENOM, HELLHAMMER, SARCOFAGO, and, of course, BATHORY to be reevaluated and given their just reward by a new generation of Metal bands: from MAYHEM, to DARKTHRONE, and beyond..

In sum we were free to be ourselves again, but that realization wasn't immediately apparent to all of us – it took time. Quorthon himself needed the rest of the 1990ies! But, after issuing 1995's confused and unsatisfying "Octagon" album, resurrecting his great 'lost' Viking Metal masterpiece "Blood On Ice" in 1996, conjuring another eclectic solo effort in 1997's "Purity Of Essence", and proffering a third installment of the "Jubileum" series in 1998, he finally set BATHORY on the path to rebirth via 2001ies "Destroyer Of Worlds". All the while, the Heavy Metal world had finally been given the chance to catch up with BATHORY's visionary and unappreciated triumphs of the late '80ies and early '90ies through the eyes of their disciples. Entire movements had developed to explore the known and unknown limits of Quorthon's original teachings – both Black Metal and Viking related – and this belated canonization of his works paved the way for his own, glorious return to form with the two-part "Nordland" albums.

Curiously, it was the release of this pair in 2002/03 that ignited the first, official and wide-ranging worldwide reissuing of the BATHORY catalog, to my knowledge. Ridiculous and amazing, I know. And, as the resident Metal geek on staff with the All-Music Guide, I made it my mission to first pen a comprehensive BATHORY bio (stretching it a little longer than my editors thought necessary, to be quite honest) and then systematically review any records that needed doing so (I'm almost done!). In the process, I saw much of my 'life in Metal' clearly reflected in Quorthon's trials, failures and triumphs. By extension, I also felt a sort of kinship with the man that ultimately transcended the typical 'fan and idol' dynamic to qualify as, dare I say it, a brotherhood of Heavy Metal fans, one and all.

What am I trying to prove with all of the above? Shit I don't know! Possibly that BATHORY has consistently stood for Heavy Metal's underground, independent, fuck-the-way Sayers ethos as well as any better known giants of the genre. Even more than that, Quorthon can and should be hailed as a pioneer in a much wider spectrum of music. Consider the following: BATHORY's experiments and mastery of numerous Metallic styles and sub-genres is almost without peer in the history of Heavy Metal! Consider that, as well as giving hordes of Scandinavian music lovers their first regional Black Metal hero to emulate, Quorthon essentially handed them the keys to their own musical identity for generations to come when he invented Viking Metal! Quorthon arguably embodied – or at least made the first successful career out of – the very concept of a one-man, multi-instrumental band in Heavy Metal.

Going one step further, he became an entrepreneur by founding and subsequently helming (with help from his father) his own record company: BLACK MARK, which has since been responsible for introducing and promoting all manner of important and quality Heavy Metal acts. His inventive DIY recordings alongside faithful engineer/co-producer Boss at a technically impaired converted car garage audaciously named HEAVENSHORE STUDIOS remain a near-miraculous feat. It boggles my mind to imagine what they did accomplish with minimal recording equipment, and what they could have accomplished with today's recording technology at hand. But then, perhaps, that would diminish that elusive magic element in the music...

Really, one could sit around all day coming up with impressive facts about Quorthon's career with BATHORY. But, since I'm getting a little long in the tooth here (and I have to let my girlfriend use the computer before she kills me), suffice to say that, like one of my greatest rock and roll heroes, Frank Zappa, Quorthon was a true original. Compare many of the above-cited undertakings to those of Frank - himself another untimely loss to all music lovers - and the parallels are impressive, though not surprising.

Finally, and just in case the preceding narrative sounds way too first-person to everyone's liking, Metalion and I wanted to wrap this up with a quick but complete celebration of BATHORY and Quorthon's basic discography. Not as harsh critics, for once (leave that shit for the mainstream rags this time), but as the enthusiastic fans we think we are, but generally simply in vain to remain. Hopefully, this will encourage anyone who hasn't yet had the opportunity - whether through geographical isolation, lack of information, whatever - to sample BATHORY's work to go out and discover what they had to offer.

May Thomas 'Quorthon' Forsberg rest in peace and long live BATHORY!



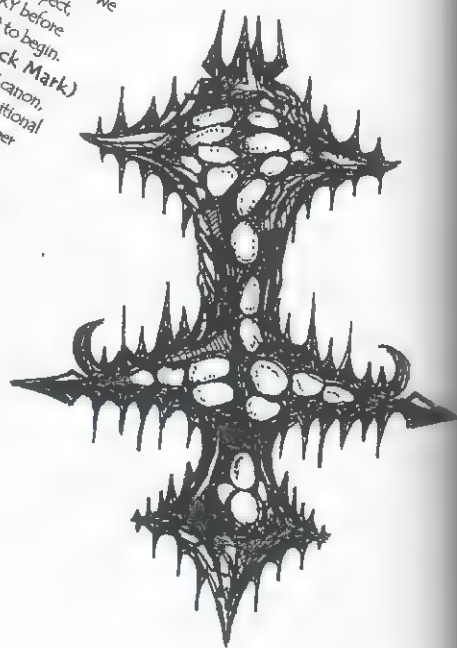
1983 The Return (demo) No label
VENOM, VENOM, VENOM all the way! Cronos, Mantas and Abaddon are the reason BATHORY came into existence, and this heavily swapped demo was surely one of the most popular of the '80s tape-trading network - as sure as METALLICA's "No Life 'til Leather."

1984 BATHORY (Black Mark)
The proper debut: rude, crude and unforgiving, like VENOM's early works its ridiculously lo-fi sonic qualities proved the ultimate leveler, doing for Metal what Punk did for rock in bringing it down to earth, where even mere mortals could make their musical dreams a reality. Uncompromising, visceral, inspirational, shit yeah!

1985 The Return... (Black Mark)
Pretty much more of the same as the debut here, but as we say in Brazil, why mess with a winning football team? In retrospect, "The Return..." gave us a final glimpse of primal BATHORY before evolution set in... Quorthon's creative searching was about to begin.

1987 Under The Sign Of The Black Mark (Black Mark)
Still one of the most revered LPs in the BATHORY canon, record, its slightly more refined songwriting efforts to follow. Thrash attack bridging the creative gap between the rudimentary albums before it and the truly groundbreaking efforts to follow. SLAYER was now the reigning influence (see the inimitable Thrashers "Woman Of Dark Desires" and "Enter The Eternal Fire"), but Quorthon was about to graduate from disciple to cult leader.

1988 Blood Fire Death (Black Mark)
Probably still my personal favorite, "Blood Fire Death" crystallized the bulk of the Viking Metal template for the first time. More melodies, varied pacing, epic song lengths, and symphonic overtones were just some of the new compositional elements made immediately evident by "Oden's Ride Over Nordland" (quite possibly the greatest Heavy Metal intro-piece ever!). "A Fine Day To Die" and the title track sure, these ambitious often served to reveal the technical limitations of both HEAVENSHORE STUDIOS and Quorthon's occasionally tuneless clean vocals; but not enough to sour the artist's watershed decision to base most of his lyrics on Scandinavian culture - not Beelzebub and company.



1990 Hammerheart (Black Mark)

Perhaps even more representative of the nascent Viking Metal sub-genre, "Hammerheart" exorcised BATHORY's last lingering Black Metal influences for good. Massive compositions like "Shores In Flames" and "Vallhalla" fine-tuned Quorthon's lyric writing abilities and took his orchestrated arrangements to an entirely new level of sophistication. Simply put, another stone cold Heavy Metal classic for the ages.

1991 Twilight Of The Gods (Black Mark)

BATHORY's Viking Metal innovations were starting to sound a little tired by the time of this third installment, but what it may have lacked in fire and fury, *Twilight of the Gods* more than compensated for in terms of somber, evocative beauty, definitely not as life changing as the previous two efforts, but just as essential.

1992 Jubileum Volume I (comp) (Black Mark)

Seemingly having arrived at a creative crossroads, and acutely aware that he'd tapped out his Viking Metal songwriting for the time being, Quorthon took stock of his career with this first of three retrospective sets – an absolute MUST in any self-respecting Heavy Metal collection, needless to say.

1993 Jubileum Volume II (Black Mark)

See above. Featuring additional highlights from the same period and albums as the first volume, "Jubileum II" is not surprisingly nearly as seminal and just as required.

1994 Album (released under Quorthon name) (Black Mark)

A 'solo' release featuring all forms of atypical songwriting not fit for the usual BATHORY mindset. Album is actually a surprisingly good – if completely unexpected – creative detour touching on everything from basic hard rock and Metal, to alternative rock, and beyond.

1994 Requiem (Black Mark)

This back-to-Black-Metal-basics affair was refreshing in spirit, but ultimately not as satisfying as BATHORY's Viking creations, and also appeared to signal the end of the road for Quorthon under the BATHORY name.

1995 Octagon (Black Mark)

Not really sure what Quorthon had in mind for this lackluster offering, but it probably features some of the loudest sound quality of any BATHORY release – and that's saying something. Errr, so much for focusing only on the positives... "Octagon" had little with which to defend itself.

1996 Blood On Ice (Black Mark)

Rescued from various botched recordings cut during BATHORY's golden, Viking period, and accompanied by extensive liner notes shedding light on BATHORY's heretofore mysterious history, *Blood on Ice* was a virtual golden grail for the band's long-suffering fans. Newly finished ancient epics like "The Stallion", "The Lake" and "Gods Of Thunder Of Wind And Of Rain" stand up to most anything heard on BATHORY's original Viking trilogy and served to start Quorthon's next attempted retirement on a positive note.

1997 Purity Of Essence (released under Quorthon name) (Black Mark)

Once again revealing a gentler, more sensitive side of the BATHORY mastermind, this second 'solo' outing is also rife with highly unorthodox and non-Metallic songwriting, and continues to polarize fans like no other – approach with caution.

1998 Jubileum Volume III (Black Mark)

Still the perfect solution for anyone unwilling to delve deeper into BATHORY's 'so-so' years, "Jubileum III" offers the band's three preceding albums.

2001 Katalog (comp.) (Black Mark)

[A compilation with no unreleased material]

2001 Destroyer Of Worlds (Black Mark)

A fitting way to end the silence of recent years, "Destroyer Of Worlds" was a fine release, which seemed to touch upon almost all of BATHORY's past creative exploits in confident, yet understated fashion.

2002 Nordland I (Black Mark)

A true and unequivocal return to the sound of BATHORY's Viking Metal peak, "Nordland I" may have looked like a desperate step back to some people, but how can you argue with such consistent songwriting, a set of new-fangled will-be classics like "Ring Of Gold" and "Great Hall Awaits a Fallen Brother," or for that matter, the master of the genre himself coming home to roost? For me, at least, this album felt like a welcome and justified carrying on of a great tradition, as did the equally worthy...

2003 Nordland II (Black Mark)

"Nordland II", which, unfortunately and unsuspectingly served as a final farewell. If there's any consolation, it lies in the fact that the ever prolific Quorthon must have left a ton of BATHORY material stashed away in the vaults somewhere...here's hoping we get to hear it soon.



By Jeanette Lohaus

& Eduardo Rivadavia



As usual I think it is on time to present something slightly out of the ordinary (as far as SLAYER goes)

So, here is JARBOE...

After so many years in the more extreme music 'scene' I'm always impressed by how you always are able to re-invent yourself and never go stale. What is your explanation to this? What is it that drives you to go on and on?

- A number of things come to mind about 'scenes' and output. First of all, 'creative' output or 'self-expression' may or may not involve what is publicly available. Is a musician or a writer or an artist any less of one if they don't get a record deal, book deal, or show in a gallery? Second of all, your question might actually be better answered by an observer instead of answered by me. For better or worse, I have been 'told' by journalists that I am 'a real artist' and so I suppose that when you are simply doing your work, and there is no separation between your work and who you are, then you are doing what you do because it is your nature; you have no choice.

In recent years you have been working with people in the Metal world, like Attila for instance. How do you see the link to your work and extreme Metal?

- It has 'fight'. This is an art world expression but it means something like 'tension'. I was raised in rural Mississippi and New Orleans, Louisiana. I was exposed to a lot of aberration and excess in the culture/mythology/voodoo of the Deep South. My work prior to joining SWANS involved total body screaming and performing in the nude with animal blood smeared on my skin and contact mics. I was exploring the boundaries between sanity and insanity as classified by the psychiatric profession and the culture. I was interested in pushing the body to the point of exhaustion. I continue to be fascinated by Indian holy men who would be considered 'mad' by western standards and doctors. The reason I was originally in SWANS is because I felt it was the slowest loudest heaviest dirge-like extreme monolith in the world. I was involved in that aesthetic for several years and then began a perverse style of melody and song structure which I believe gave it even more 'fight'. This evolution was one in which I had a lot to do with as I had years of vocal and musical training prior to SWANS.

Please tell also how you discovered extreme Metal and what is your fascinations behind it.....Can you see patterns in extreme Metal compared to your work that is similar?

- I have been drawn to what is deemed extreme music all of my life. I leave specific categories to others. As for seeing patterns, all I can say is that I do feel a powerful and natural attraction/connection that has no further explanation.

One of your last albums was also released by Metal related labels (THE END in the states and SEASON OF MIST here in Europe) do you think by signing with them you reached out to a brand new audience? And the other way around, have there been any reactions from your old fan base which is surprised you signed to Metal labels?

- Some journalists at Hellfest 2009 asked me how it felt to be the first one representing experimental music at that Metal festival. Instead of challenging these categorizations, I replied that it felt great!

Many artists say that they feed on their fan bases, especially in a live situation, is that also how you see things? How important is performing live for you?

- It is actually akin to being an oracle with a spirit demon giving voice from inside me rather than me 'eating' members of the audience. It is the band and I becoming one and channeling.

It is of course impossible not to mention SWANS when talking to you, how much would you say that your time in SWANS shaped you as in form of what you are doing now?

- Girl to Woman. My life prior to SWANS was my formative and early education. It is what prepared me. SWANS, then, was graduate school. I value my years in SWANS and working with Michael in both SWANS and in our project called SKIN/WORLD OF SKIN and the "Sacrificial Cake" and "Drainland" albums, etc as essential and integral components of my very being.

Do you think being in SWANS was necessarily to put you where you are now musically?

- I don't believe either Michael or I would be where we are now musically if we had not worked together. We combined our knowledge and aesthetics and talents in the work we did together and we each changed as a result.

What was the strongest thing about SWANS, what is your best memory?

- I remember everything. There are too many experiences to select THE one strongest and best. To give an answer to this interview, I would say: the moments of utter transcendence on stage during the final SWANS tour when I experienced being perfectly in the moment and now realize it was true nirvana AND the breakdown of my ego in the studio as I did take after take of a vocal to find the purest and most naked AND lack of compromise of one's vision because of or even acknowledgement to the voices of naysayers and critics who would rip you apart.

And do you think at any point SWANS failed?

- At the time, oh yes! I rebelled furiously and there were many emotional scenes during two particularly conflicted moments in that history. One was the big studio production of the cover version of "Love Will Tear Us Apart" - 'red version'. I much preferred my more humble small studio 'black version'. Now I see those two versions as the yin and yang. The other big dissent was the extravagant major label production of "The Burning World" album which to me had much less integrity than "Children Of God" or "The Great Annihilator" and certainly less integrity than SKIN "Blood Women Roses, Shame Humility Revenge" or "Ten Songs For Another World". However, I believe SWANS more than redeemed ourselves with the final "Soundtracks For The Blind" tour and I actually felt things were just getting interesting in terms of extreme for me again in particular with that tour's devastating production of "I Crawled" when Michael suddenly ended the band and announced he was done with rock music.

Michael Gira has recently expressed that he is working on new SWANS material which will be a SWANS/ANGEL OF LIGHT sort of album, any comments on that.....

- Besides Michael, I was the only one involved from the time I joined until the time the band ended. Figuratively and literally: I uprooted my life. I gave blood, sweat, tears, and actually life itself to SWANS. He can call it anything he wants. He hasn't asked me to be a part of it. Therefore, to me, SWANS Are Dead.

You are known to collaborate with a lot of different people in a lot of different spheres, how do you chose who to work with? And I assume there must be too little time to do all the work you want?

- The collaborations are chosen from one or all of these factors: 1. it is someone I personally know 2. it is someone whom I respect knows 3. I have a gut feeling that urges me on. Time is not the detractor. Energy and state of mind is the detractor.

What is some of your musical goals you haven't achieved yet?

- Solo: I have begun exploring a new hybrid style of music with a series of CD-r only releases on my website that experiment with where I am going next in my solo work. I feel completely honed in and stimulated with this direction.

Collaboration: There is an artist/producer in Norway whose work I deeply respect. I feel instinctively that his production style is going to result in a pure invocation.

How do you view lyrics? Some of them must be very personal and I always think it must be very hard to deliver so personal lyrics in front of an audience.....

- It is the opposite. It is very hard to deliver impersonal lyrics.

Your catalogue of music is very interesting, there is so many releases....And I was wondering if you been able to remain as the (c) copyright owner of all your music? If not, is there some you really are sad you don't own control of?

- Yes, I do own control of most of my work. In terms of control of my 'other' work, my attitude is to go right ahead and do what I want any way.

The Internet has become a very normal thing to us these days, and in a way things are more simple....And for musicians it is easier to cooperate through file sharing etc. How is that to work with someone over the net?

How does the lack of personal (face to face) music influence the music? Do you think there is any difference at all?

- Yes, it is different. I don't think one is necessarily better than the other. A dialogue can be had in either situation. Sometimes risks might be taken working separately that would not have been taken otherwise and those risks are even more intense and valuable. It really depends on who the musicians are and what their experience is with collaboration.

And on a somewhat similar note, how is it to record your own material in the safety of your own home studio as opposed to a 'regular' studio? (Of course

I do understand the more obvious things, but some times I think it is more interesting to work under pressure (aka hired studio)) so it would be interesting to hear your comments regarding that?

- This also depends on the engineer and the studio. Some of my best vocal deliveries were performed and recorded at home and then those performances were used with outside studio recorded music. I am a performance-based vocalist and if I feel passionate at 3 A.M. in the woods by my house, I want to document that feeling and record it. Unless I am living at a 24 hour studio compound, that is not going to happen anywhere but home.

If you make a song you are not completely happy with, do you just throw it away or do you try to re-work it in a later setting?

- I try and rework it. Yet, there are some cases when I have gone ahead and used it and made an effort to redeem it by performing it live in a different way, etc. I am hard on myself and difficult to please. Always striving for something more. Rarely content with myself.

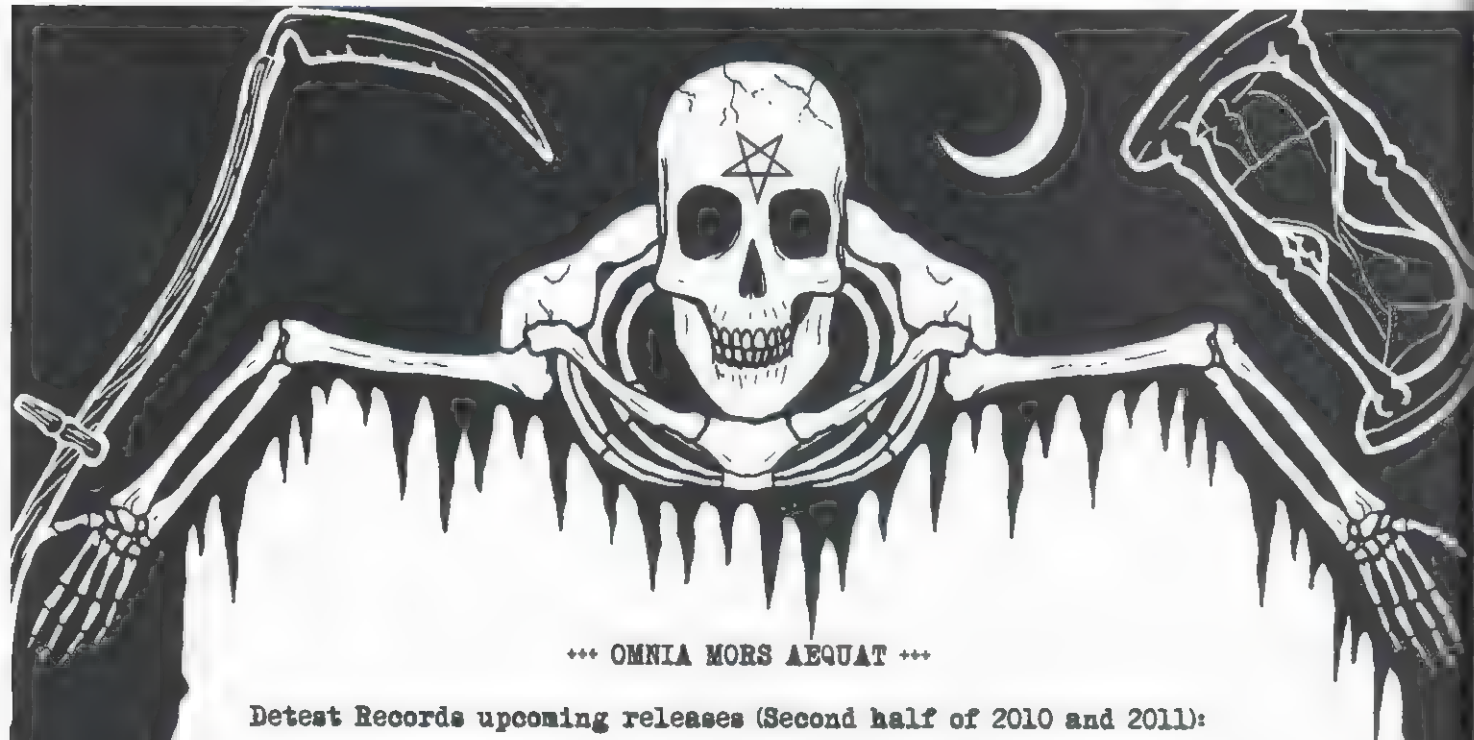


Do you find with the Internet there is a bigger demand for you to be more accessible to everyone and how do you experience that?

Yes, I do find that demand and since I have been dubbed 'an Internet pioneer' by putting my journal on my website [the 'archive' on thelivingend.com], I have a hands-on, DIY attitude that prevents me from having someone else add content and post entries on my behalf. It is a present day responsibility of the artist to have an online personality. So yet, I am currently on Twitter and Myspace and Facebook and your own website and screenshot list and more. I try to be a little more real I am the more people who care about what I do find a 'care-taker' or 'care-taker' of the reactions from people who say 'I'd be glad to get through your life. I don't provide shows but I do share the road. In live situations you sometimes decide to wander among the audience, what is the reason for that? Is it some sort of ceremony to be one with the audience? - A primary objective is to close in on the audience/performer relationship by complete admission and experience through my performance. When I go out into the room, I'm to be a vehicle for this experience. It isn't a 'show'. What is the the personal highlight for you as far as concerts goes? What do you need to consider it a good night? - I read energy. I absorb what people in the room are feeling. When the barrier is broken and there is only music, experience in the moment, it is a good night.

JARBOE pictures (c) Metalion





+++ OMNIA MORS AEQUAT +++

Detest Records upcoming releases (Second half of 2010 and 2011):

VETERNUS (Swe.) - First 7" Ep

ENTRAPMENT (NL) - First demo tape

STENCH OF DECAY (Fin.) - First 7" Ep

KRYPTS (Fin.) - First 7" Ep

MORBUS CHRON (Swe.) - Pre-album 7" Ep

PUTRID (Swe.) - First 7" Ep

MIASMAL (Swe.) - First 12" Lp

STENCH OF DECAY (Fin.) - First 12" Lp

SWALLOWED (Fin.) - First 12" Lp

KRYPTS (Fin.) - First 12" Lp

BONE SICKNESS (USA) - First 7" Ep

And some more ...

Check out Detest Records website for the most recent updates on these releases and a quality distro!



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c/o J. Marechal, Ch. du Tilleul 126, B-1300 Wavre, Belgium

May 2010

SWAKKE

DEMON DEMOS

... featured demos this time is very limited. First of all I really don't get anything anymore, and I do refuse to review stuff by given a link to download something - I'm not interested in that. The demos reviewed are things that have been given to me at certain concerts or whatever... Anyway, before I start, I think it is weird with CD R demos, tapes are much better and provide a longer lifespan, I think that CD R things are easily scratched and die pretty quick.

RAGING STEEL - Guilty As Charged promo 2009 (Sweden). A very young, talented Swedish Thrash outfit here. As the name says this is very DEATHROW inspired and its good that bands pick a few certain other bands to be influenced by than all the obvious ones.... If I am right those 3 tracks on this promo is also on the album with the same name, there should be further info here...www.myspace.com/ragingsteelswe

Trish: Drums, Guitar, Bass, Vocals, Everything

Jormundgand



JORMUNDGAND - Satanic Attack demo 2009 (Sweden). This caught me a bit of surprise as I wasn't really expecting this judging by the band name, after the keyboard intro track we are given the first proper track which starts kinda mellow but after about 90 seconds or so it turns out to a pretty nifty Metal of Death track. All in all a pretty good demo I feel have great potential as the tracks are very well composed and this is certainly music created by talented people. So I will definitely check out this band further as time goes by, and just for the hell of it here is a mini interview with the band too.

I think with a band name like JORMUNDGAND it kinda sends out the wrong signal what the band is all about, but maybe it is the blame of the so called Viking Metal bands that think a name like this would link you to that scene.... Anyway, I'm sure you have your reasons for sticking with that name so please tell why?


- To us JORMUNDGAND is the Nordic similarity to Leviathan/Tad Ekam/ Ouroboros. The master of the abyssal ocean of chaos. JORMUNDGAND is the dragon of the unformed chaos and darkness and the one who will drown this false creation with the venomous water of the wrathful chaos. We realize that our name can be misinterpreted because of the pagan/viking genre but it is sad that some people let themselves be led astray by their own ignorance. Of course our name had tribute to our northern heritage but if people had seen a little bit further into the mysteries of the dark the deeper connection between our name and our music would have been obvious to them.

After a pretty promising demo you now did a "7" which is a good way to go, a logical progression of a underground band. Do you feel that the material on the "7" more paints a picture of how you want to sound?

- The new recording gives a pretty good image of how we sound and it shows our different qualities in a good way. Right now we are looking forward to the release of the "7" vinyl. After that we are going to work on our new material and if everything goes as planned we will eventually do some live gigs further on since we are now (finally) a full band! The "7" vinyl will be released through Burning Eye Productions later this year. Until then you can hear one of the new tracks on our myspace:
www.myspace.com/jormundgand666

DÖDSÄNGEL - Helgrith demo 2009 (Norway/Canada). I must say I kinda like this one woman project, its primitive crust stuff which is great in smaller doses like this. Trish (all instruments) is originally from Canada but ended up here in Norway and has been involved in several other bands too. Another noteworthy point is the screschy vocals which is interesting as compared to most male guttural vocals.
dodsangel@hotmail.com

RIKETS CRUST - Thanatokarti demo # 2 2010 (Norway). I missed out of this lots first demo as I wasn't really sure what I would get myself into, but I accepted a copy when it was offered from bass player Evil Dave. What we have here is 6 slightly short tracks in the realm of Hardcore goes Metal - or the other way around. There are slight touches of Grind and even a touch of doom here and there, well, mostly there as I refer to the the beginning of the 2nd track "Brenn" here. Vocals are a chapter of itself as they are more in the Hardcore shouting way...(I wouldn't call it 'singing') So it might help if you are into that style of vocals. So, pretty cool stuff here.
<http://www.myspace.com/riketscrust>



With the help of E. we can present this interview with FUNERAL MIST....

"Maranatha" is the album no one thought could happen, in the sense that it actually is able to logically continue on and even outdo "Salvation's" madness and depth. Did you ever doubt that you could do another, stronger album after "Salvation"? How about now, after "Maranatha"?

- There was never any doubt! Merely seconds after "Salvation" was recorded and finalised I started working on new material, restlessly planning and conspiring until every tune and every word was exactly the way I wanted them, hence the ocean of time in-between.

However, I look upon "Maranatha" as neither stronger nor weaker than its predecessor, but more as a step to the side - a different chapter... another state.

How about now? Who knows? It is not yet certain what form FUNERAL MIST will take in the future, but know this; the will and power that FUNERAL MIST has grown to be is hard, if not impossible, to stop. The vision is colossal and must be let loose upon the masses! And as long as there is a vision, as long as I'm physically capable of recreating that vision - writing and recording music will be easy. Many are the reasons why people decide to write songs and release them on albums so people can buy them and listen to them. What drives FUNERAL MIST?

- First and foremost, as a man of faith and of great conviction - it is not only my duty, but also my fortune and my reward to spread the gospel of the Lord - such is the nature of the believer. I am a musician. A composer if you will, I need to create and I need to make my design available to the masses. I'm not able to 'not create' - such is the nature of the artist.

Is FUNERAL MIST in any way meant to be a source of knowledge, a teacher if you will, for the listener? Some people undoubtedly see it that way.

- FUNERAL MIST has always been eager to teach, develop and even command its listeners. But bear in mind that FUNERAL MIST is mostly a reflection of my own relation to my god and my religion - not some kind of handbook how to reach, obtain or master this and that - it should therefore not be looked upon as impeccable wisdom or an absolute truth.

I am frequently writing in code, constantly applying metaphors and allegory - even paradox. I deliberately leave holes in the doctrine, all to leave the listener left wanting for more, to awake a hunger!

FUNERAL MIST was never meant to be a tool for education, regard it instead as a source of inspiration, guidance in faith... immovable devotion!

FUNERAL MIST have gone from being 'a band' to something seemingly detached from such terms. In a 'Black Metal scene' context, I think of FUNERAL MIST as the Berlin wall erected on a children's playground. What is it that has driven FUNERAL MIST into being, well, very different, and why do you think more bands haven't gone in the same direction?

- FUNERAL MIST left the state of being a regular band even in its youth. I realised early on that FUNERAL MIST cannot exist as a band per se while still keeping its distinctive qualities. Through FUNERAL MIST I have created a will stronger than my own, steadfastly toiling towards certain goals and achievements. Where I once was the head, I am now the tail, and this is how it must be.

A holy mission is in progress - the channelling of light and darkness; mountains are being moved! I must and will not let the wills and ideas of others interfere.

What do you feel when you look back at the (positive) state of things in the first years of FUNERAL MIST's existence, meaning the more physical, cold-hearted and secluded Black metal scene?

- It is with mixed feelings I look back upon that time. I would say, that most things as far as FUNERAL MIST is concerned are more satisfactory as of today - especially compared to the very first years. Substantially more focused, more potent.

I do however know what you mean when talking about the more physical and cold-hearted ways of the old days - ways that often seems forgotten in today's Black Metal scene. I can't but feel that many of the bands of today are merely playing Black Metal, whilst yesterday's bands were actually living it.

But (!) it is what you make it that times are changing is a total excuse and certainly doesn't mean that you have to. Alas... FUNERAL MIST is very alive! And so is the Lord.

Through the years there have been very few Black Metal bands that have been seriously outspoken Satanists/Devil worshippers. This is all well, anything else would have been a lie. But yet Satan has always been present. Is it possible to perform relevant Black Metal without being a Satanist?

- My first response would be: No, of course not! Destructive Satanism and fanatic Devil worship is, and must be, the very foundation of everything labelled 'Black Metal'. Then again, there are elements, individuals and groups, within the scene who have not subscribed to any faith or considerable philosophy, yet so inhumanly twisted and beyond what is known as 'evil' that the energy generated is hard to ignore. When sufficient negative energies are channelled, regardless of host, one must acknowledge its power, and yes - at least to a certain degree consider it as 'relevant' as far as Black Metal is concerned.

Ultimately, for the perceptive there will be no question about where divine elements have been consulted and where it has not. Spirit sees spirit, flesh sees flesh.

Do you believe there are people with the same outspoken love for the Devil as FUNERAL MIST, but entirely unrelated to Black Metal?

- As dedicated, yes - of course! As outspoken, I doubt it...

Some mean that the goal of a Satanist is to break free from his chains (god) in order to reach freedom (Satan). This context somehow seems far from FUNERAL MIST. According to you, can salvation be talked about in terms of liberation?

- It all depends on how one defines 'liberation'. But yes, breaking free from the chains of God - reducing the human within the self and cast aside the laws of flesh... indeed goals that every Satanist should strive for - even live by.

I myself seldom or never use the word 'liberation', as the belief system myself and FUNERAL MIST represents and advocates is anything but liberating or something that could be recognised as freedom. Quite the reverse...

To me the small step between "Salvation" and "Maranatha" in terms of religious language suggests a very steadfast and determined belief. Do you still see yourself developing within religion, or have you arrived at a stage where you feel fulfilled?

- I am constantly developing - each day is clearer than the preceding one. I have felt my spirit reach into the unreachable, I have uncovered countless spheres of forbidden wisdom, conquered truths not meant for humankind... but fulfilled? Not even close. In the world of true knowledge, I am a child.

Does religion have to be practical, or can it be something limited to the state of one's mind only?

- I could not deny any solely practising religion mentally. Know though, that the ceremonial demonstration of your submission will shorten the distance between you and the Lord, it sharpens your faith and bestows upon you a presence not accessible for a mere mind. Who are we not to give praise!? The ritual shall broaden the way... in spirit as in flesh, in mind as in action.

NIFELHEIM



There is only one way to end this, the last interview made for this issue is of course with NIFELHEIM. Mainly answered by Tyrant. THE WORLD WILL END IN FLAMES!

At this point, there are four full length albums out, some "7"s and a split..... Are you happy with how things have progressed for NIFELHEIM as far as music goes over the years?

- Well, yeah I'm definitely satisfied with the musical progression but I wish we would have been able to put out some more albums during all of these years because there is a hell of a lot of material that isn't put together yet. I'm satisfied with how we are progressing with our music, in a sense that I can say I'm proud that we are still able to write music that is still exactly in the same spirit as when we started. I can say also that we have done some brave decisions musically to not make it popular just because we can.

As you grow older as musicians are things different now than they used to be as far as composing music goes?

- For me personally not at all. I've had some strong visions and passion to reflect what's in the dark abyss of my soul and there has always been like this tone(s) that's inside of me that almost talks or sings to me. Of course regarding the technical aspect there is a lot of progression, and you can develop. I think the hardest thing is to write music with heart and with taste. To put that magical spirit in it. That's obviously not obtainable very often for others...

A lot of bands make their best music on their early albums/demos and then it just turns out to something below average, NIFELHEIM always had a high quality as far as the song quality goes, what is your secret?

- The secret is that we are genuine and real to what we do and we do it with determination! Again I can also say that it's just to open up your soul/inner mind and listen to what is there, and then do tell what's saying. For me it's quite non understandable how bands just lose their spirit and the air goes out of them, I think the answer might be that some bands only were good because they lived and leached on the spark of others energy for the moment when something was in the air.

The "Envoy Of Lucifer" album was maybe a tribute to SARCOFAGUS from Finland and their album "Envoy Of Death" if I got things right, was this somehow a silent tribute?

- Yeah.. it is. Its cool I think to sometimes put some hints here and there for the Metalheads to think about.. who is not poser enough to not understand. There's also another hidden tribute in the title, those who have eyes can see... I can say also that "Envoy of Lucifer" is hardly even a silent tribute. (Well, it doesn't sound, its just a title) It's better to use some inspiration from a title then to steal riffs if you wanna make a 'tribute' to some band. How is it to work with a kind of steady line up for the last years? Do you have to compromise certain things now since there are so many people in the band?

- Well, first of all a steady line up doesn't mean that its easier, it seems like it's harder to even do a rehearsal now then it was when we didn't even have a line up. Of course there is no musical compromise at all.

In recent years you can see even bands being influenced by NIFELHEIM, especially in Sweden.....What do you think of that?

- I can say that it's good that our Metal preachings have reached someone! Also a sign of good taste. I am sure these bands must be better than many others. If just more people listened to us the 'Black Metal' scene could be something brutal and raw again!

You are not doing interviews anymore are you?

- That's correct. This is the last NIFELHEIM interview! We have been so fed up with this total bullshit that is called media, journalists and most of all the Internet, which is ruining everything! Whatever we do or say we are already stamped (by some people) as non serious. One important point for us in this world of today which is overflowing with information (or disinformation) about everything and with everything being easily accessible through the Internet is that we have no interest at all to reach out to these common 'average Joe' people that would never understand what we are about anyway. I trust that our fans, the true Metalheads will look further to get the information they need about the band. I still see NIFELHEIM as a total underground thing and we are still against everything so just fuck off! One matter that has disturbed me more then ever is this 'Dimebag/Burton' fuss that was spanned out as some 'statement' on the Internet. All I can say about this matter once and for all is that I am not hating either of these musicians neither do I want to put any disgrace upon their memory! I am a total Metalhead so I do not wish to have that stamp upon me at all! This of course goes for the rest of the band as well! It is overwhelming to see how people just believe everything they read on the Internet or newspapers/magazines blindly. It is crazy how any kind of loose rumor can all of a sudden turn in to a fact after some rounds on the Internet.

By the way, reading a common metal mag (or blogg... uuurrng) nowadays is like going to a disco, one just don't belong there! So, simply to sum it up we are just too superior to belong in the media anymore! One of the problems with being a die hard Metal head these days are the well known fact that there is simply too many bands and too many useless people involved, of course there are ways to take advantage of that, but how do yo deal with the fact that so many people destroys what once was sacred to us? Do you think it is possible that things will be like they once were ever again?

- I totally agree with your point! Your basically saying exactly how it is! One thing that NOFELHEIM always have worked for is to reverse the Black Metal scene and retribute it to what it once was! The only thing that would be better then the old times is Armageddon and that everything dies! Anyhow.. This thing with not doing interviews anymore is a part of it. To cut off the ones who don't have their own mind, because we don't care about them anyway. We are exposing real (Black) Metal to the ones who have the will to see it. What more can one do? Death to posers!!! We have chosen the path of not taking advantage of the useless people. NIFELHEIM will continue but we will be around like a morbid abomination lurking in the shadows and only visible for the dark souls.

Lyrics and NIFELHEIM is always an interesting thing, you are not really too public about them but they certainly are of highly importance, so why are they never published? Do you see it possible to get the understanding of the music just by listening to the music?

- I think that is it possible to understand the music by just listening to it. I think the sinister feeling and the raging violence is clearly revealing our whole concept, even though there is yet another dimension to discover with the lyrics unconcealed. We are trying to make people suffer and wait for that extra dimension to the music.

NIFELHEIM has played quite a few gigs over the years, what makes a concert more special to you? And do you keep track of all gigs you done?

- The more madness the more special! The Widsommer massacre was most special to me because it was huge and with a strong black magic feeling in the air. We have always said that as soon as we could we were going to do gigs with DISSECTION and during the circumstances over the years it never happened until their very last gig! Which made it so important and amazing! I remember Jon also was very happy about it. It was like a legacy.

My aim is to make every gig totally special and of course that has to go with the rest of the band. I fucking hate mediocre half hearted performances, that's not Metal! If you're not going to do it real then don't do it at all! As far as how many gigs we have done, I have not really kept track.

Now we need to tell the story of my bass which ended up in your possession, it began with me buying a bass in the late '80ies of Rene from CADAVER, finding out I could not play at all I sold it to Juck of TREBLINKA, after that the history is unclear so feel free to continue it.....

- Well Juck owned it for a good while and as I know "Crawling In Vomits" up till "Astral Sleep" was recorded on that bass, then not too far back he sold it to a kid. My bass guitar that I've had since 26 years just had been totally demolished by Lufthansa Airlines and I needed a new bass so of course I tracked your old bass up and forced the 'boy' of Mr. DEATH to sell it to me immediately. (Which completed my TREBLINKA collection just perfectly)! Its a Westone Raider II which may not be the usual choice for a musician that's been in the business for over 20 years (especially not for those who are into 'sophisticated Black Metal art' haha) but I totally enjoy it! Arrghh!

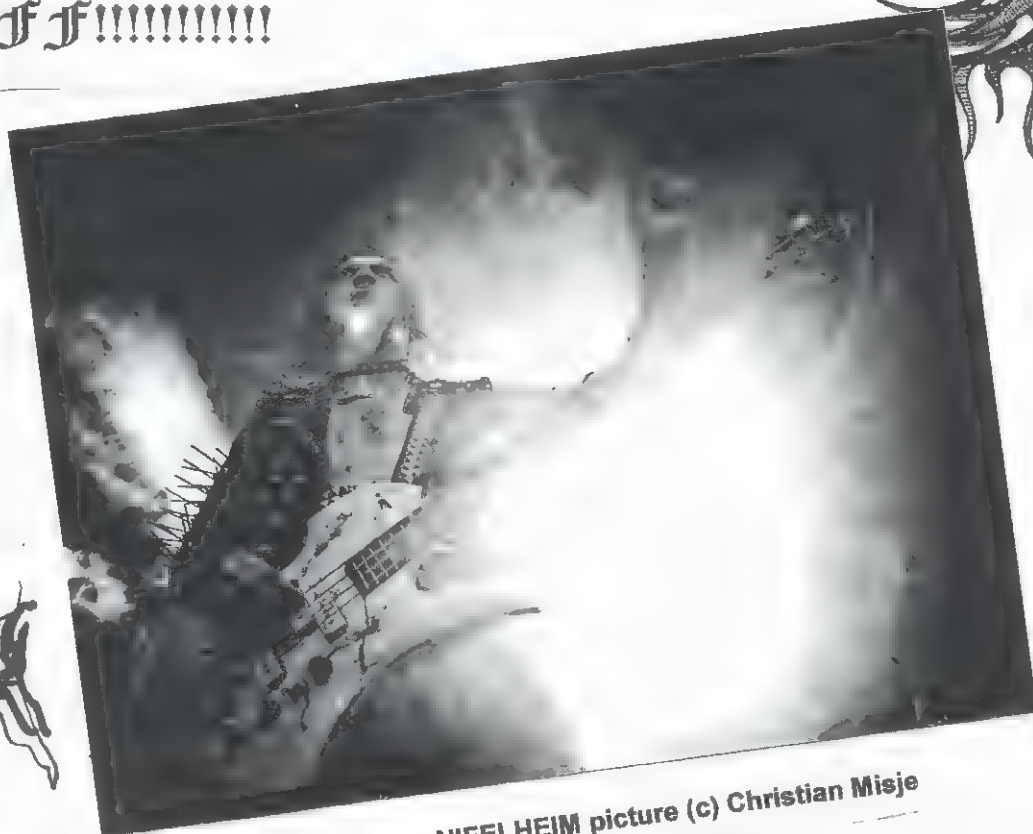
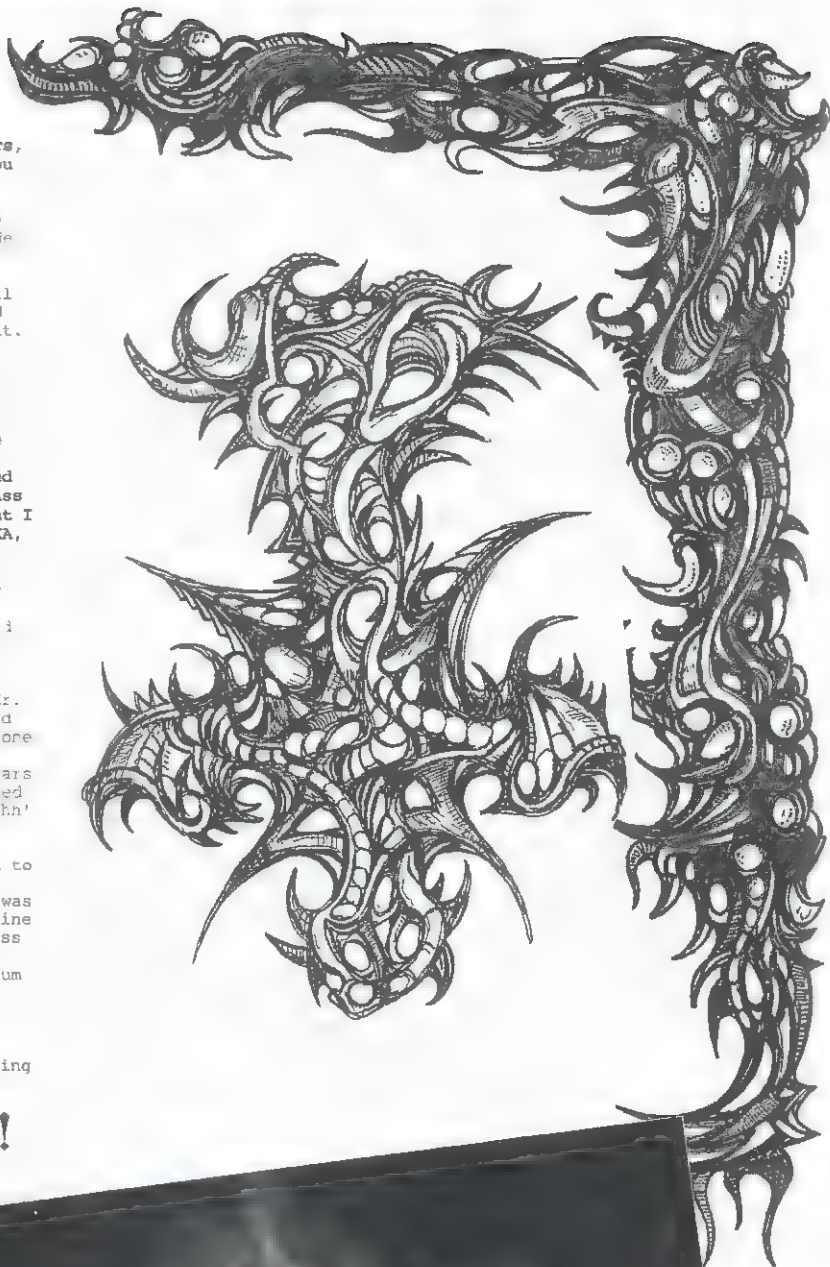
Your memories of SLAYER MAGAZINE?

- What first comes to mind is that SLAYER MAGAZINE have always been one of the very first in the world to cover the true pioneers and the most genuine great acts of extreme Death/Thrash Metal since the music was born and I think there is no comparison in the genuine value, attitude, knowledge and discovery of countless acts of high importance for the scene. From back in the day until now SLAYER is the only trustable medium for the total Death Metal! Also I remember blood, broken bones, Arne Babb, madness, Sarpsborg, evil plans, knives and violence!

Final words...

To sum up everything in cosmos there is just one thing to say..

FUCK OFF!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



NIFELHEIM picture (c) Christian Misje

NOCTERNITY emerged from the flames of the blackest paths in mid 90's in Athens by Chris and Alex. The first rehearsals were recorded Easter 1997 and the first full length album in 1999 entitled "NOCTURNITY". NOCTERNITY were signed to SOLISTITUM RECORDS Germany from where also the second full length album entitled "Onyx" got released. In 2004 Nocternity sign to AVANTGARDE RECORDS Italy. By that time also several split "7" were released with KAWIR (GR) from SOMBRE RECORDS, NASTROND (SWE) and MORRIGAN (GER). "Harps of the Ancient Temples" "7" the year 2006 is released by AVANTGARDE as a pre-taste of the 3rd full length album which is nearly into completion. The years 2004-2010 NOCTERNITY remain in the background since more time is spent on their own label KYRCK PRODUCTIONS releasing bands such as ULVER, VED BUENS ENDE, MANES, ROTTING CHRIST, IN THE WOODS, THORNS, STRID etc etc. In 2009 the urge for a new creation adds in the line up Ravn Harnar Raumr from STRID and Daemon from LIMBONIC ART to complete the line up for the long awaited "Harps of the Ancient Temples" opus the year 2010. NOCTERNITY stands for the individualism and pure old school feeling within this delayed genre.



Anita Hel Bråten

Profiles were something I used to do here and there in past issues of SLAYER MAGAZINE, like some sort of short interviews with more or less random people. Many years ago I suggested to Hel I should do one with her so here in the last issue is a updated version of her profile....

me: Anita Hel Bråten

kname: don't have any, Hel is my real name

date: 5th October 1975

templace: Odda in Hordaland, Norway

children: A son, Sigurd born 1992 and named after Sigurd Fåvnebane the dragon slayer

Pets: A black cat which Helton named Nekro 12 years old

interests: Fast old cars, swimming, soccer, football, boxing, ancient history

Books: Ancient history

TV: Serial killers, unsolved crimes

Favorite drink: Gato Negreiro w/ banana

Favorite food: Pizza and chocolate milk



Favorite bands: too many to mention all, but to name a few:
Scorpions, Dio, Accept, Black Sabbath, Ozzy, Motley Crüe, Early Destruction, Skid Row, early Megadeth, the first album of Bon Jovi, Twisted Sister, Iron Maiden, Cinderella, early Anthrax, Queensrÿche, Alice Cooper, Guns n' Roses, early Europe, Whitesnake, Led Zepplin, Saxon, AC/DC ++ and basically all organic sounding speed/thrash, bm. with soul.

Favorite albums: Too many to mention, but Darkthrone has a couple of real killers!! ~~Darkthrone~~

Favorite musician: Nockturno Culto of Darkthrone, Fenriz of Darkthrone/Isengard, Alice Cooper, Varg of Burzum.

Last words: Rip Dio - Heavy Metal will never die



Darkness Descends

Some releases in our history of time that once was. There is obviously too many releases of dodgy quality (even if it has been a long time since the last SLAYER it seems like some things never change.....) So I been scanning a few labels, checking out certain releases and decided to have some reviews. I really don't have the interest or time to listen to shit music anymore so most of this is releases I actually like, but I added one or two others for the historic relevance.....Even if its fun to slag records I really don't feel like wasting any ones time with that, especially not mine. This is just some records I liked or listened to over recent history.....and whoever submitted material and didn't get a review - I wouldn't say I am 'sorry' but sometimes it is hard enough to come up with a proper review even if the record is OK...

WATAIN - Sworn To The Dark CD/2LP (NED) On WATAIN's third album they have fine tuned their sound to perfection. This album is forged in the fire of classic Black Metal. It is always interesting to see bands who takes their message seriously and how that portrays itself in the music. The music is brought to a more serious level.... And its inspiring to hear bands who are totally dedicated to the darker arts. WATAIN performs Black Metal of utter quality musically very rooted in classic bands still taking things further - The massacre just began...

WATAIN - Lawless Darkness CD/2LP (SEASON OF MIST/NED) As stated above, the massacre just began....I had high hopes for this release and I'm extremely pleased that it lived up to my extremely high expectations. WATAIN marches forwards keeping their trademark sound and taking everything even one step further. I'm impressed by bands that are on the fourth album and still outdoing their old material.... And that is pretty strange to say, as I see all their earlier albums as masterpieces in their own right too. Still, there is a progression from album to album and when you think they reached perfection they still step up and outdo everything. This album is a journey and it demands your attention constantly. Even if this is a very long album it is never boring, it keeps you focused and attention completely. After listening to this album it feels like you been through something quite different.....A Black Metal masterpiece who takes the songwriting more seriously and will for sure be a classic, not even in the Black Metal world but in the Metal world in general. And when the album reaches "Waters Of Ain", well, no more words are needed...And so his burning ship depart out from these shores - never to return - and so he sets his sail towards the setting sun - At the end of the world...

FUNERAL MIST - Maranatha 2LP (NED)

FUNERAL MIST, this entity hailing from Sweden never disappoints and it was so refreshing to have "Maranatha" in my hands. When the world is full of mediocrity there is always a good feeling to hear something as unique as this. Black Metal these days seems to be a playground for musicians who have no real feelings for Black Metal or what it means, luckily this is different. There is something very disturbing about this release, something very uncomfortable that you are morbidly attached too. There are hypnotic parts, disturbing parts and totally over the top hellish assaults. This is what Black Metal is all about.....**FUNERAL MIST** keeps your attention all the time, there is such a morbid atmosphere to this album and it is very hard to let it go. This is a record that must be listened to in its entire form, it is simply impossible to listen to one or two tracks on this a burn. There is a need to listen to this album in full. There are a lot of surprises and morbid passages, this simply is audio neli perfection.....And there is more to come!

DISSECTION - Reinkaos CD/2LP (THE END)

DISSECTION's final masterpiece, a lot of controversy for this album, and I really do laugh of all the people that never understands this. People saying things like 'Ohh....it sounds like IN FLAMES'.... You people saying so will never get it, don't you understand there is more than music that matters? That this is a blackened masterpiece? This is masterful Metal of Death. Very well crafted and executed extremely well - every song is a masterpiece. The legacy will never die....

JARBOE - Mahakali CD (SEASON OF MIST) I always been a great fan of JARBOE from her days in SWANS, the WONDERFUL WORLD OF SKIN and her ever increasing solo career. I think it is interesting how she always stay on top of things after so many years in the business through countless of albums. I do think this album will approach to a different crowd than her earlier work. Mainly due to the labels releasing this (THE END and SEASON F MIST) and guest appearances by Attila and Phil Anselmo. Very interesting people to work with altho' JARBOE never been a stranger when it comes to co-operation with other people, NEUROSIS comes to mind.....Music is not as out there as some of her earlier works but it certainly have an experimental eerie edge to it. JARBOE's vocals are as always spectacular. And every project she been involved in is worth checking out.

JARBOE - Alchemy CD (TWILIGHT) This is a limited JARBOE CD (in 1000 copies I believe) and it is yet another essential release, this time it is more quiet and atmospheric than "Mahakali" for instance but obviously it is still JARBOE. The intensity that is found in all her music is definitely very present....and that keeps your attention....

SUNN O)) - Monoliths & Dimensions CD/2 LP (SOUTHERN LORD)

I do admit, listening to this band is a particular experience, I'm not sure if this works better in a live setting or in the safety of your own home. My conclusion is that both things are very giving under the right circumstances so both parts work. I read that Stephen O'Malley said that this was their "Into The Pandemonium" album and that statement makes sense, it IS more different than their earlier outputs, it is still a very heavy drone album but take the vocals of Attila for instance which takes everything one notch up, added with dare I say melodies? An unique listening session....

NIFELHEIM - Envoy Of Lucifer CD/LP (REGAIN) It might take years between every release from NIFELHEIM, but again that is something that doesn't matter. When NIFELHEIM strikes with their fourth full length they are again in a league of their own. I simply refuse to compare this to any of their earlier releases as NIFELHEIM always are capable of making the best album ever. NIFELHEIM are simply different, NIFELHEIM exist in their own realm of crushing Black Metal. Musically branded on early TREBLINKA and South American acts like VULCANO. No, they don't sound familiar, the vibe is what is familiar. And add to this a genuine passion of real fucking Metal. And buy the two first ones again too as they been re-released by REGAIN and contains liner notes by moi

TRIPTYKON - Eparistera Daimines CD/2 LP (PROWLING DEATH/CENTURY MEDIA) I was having high hopes for this as I become rather fond of "Monotheist" from CELTIC FROST over the years. So, obviously there are a lot of hints to that album on this TRIPTYKON disc, but it is still different. Tom Warrior mind always seems to be set on progression and never really repeating himself, so the end result here is slightly more disturbing than "Monotheist", obviously in a 'good' way. There are other influences here which is not heard on "Monotheist" which makes the result here even more complete.... It is bitter, hateful, aggressive, heavy and completely devoted to the last minute. In the past I never really been to fond of overly long albums, but when it is done as clever as this (and WATAIN) it is just perfect. There is no filler material here, everything is here for a purpose, and you have to listen to the whole album for the full experience.

BEHERIT - Engram CD (SPINEFARM) Hmmmmmmmm, pretty interesting release from BEHERIT. Not quite as chaotic and primitive as their early releases, and luckily not too much of this ambient crap that I didn't think fit BEHERIT very well either. This release is somewhat in between those leaning mostly to somewhat epic Black Metal.....It is a lot cleaner now and for me that is not necessarily a bad thing. It still lends a lot to the BATHORY stomping sound but things are more under control now if you can say that.

NEFANDUS - Death Holy Death CD (LEFT LIGHT EMANATIONS) Another ghost from the past haunts us yet again. Swedish NEFANDUS strikes with "Death Holy Death". I'm very much in favour of Swedish Black Metal as compared to most other countries, the Swedes definitely got the right ideas and can execute them in a perfect way, without imitating too many well known others. The structures of the songs are extremely well composed and there is something additional to this album that cannot be simply described. A very interesting album I keep coming back to.

GRAVE DESECRATION - Sign Of Doom CD Nothing quite beats the sound of South American Metal at its best. Brazil once was the hotbed for splendid acts like SARCOPHAGO, MUTILATOR, VULCANO etc. but sadly enough the influx of shitty bands infected Brazil many years ago..... In past days Brazil was equal with quality but.... Oh well, so hearing such a great band as GRAVE DESECRATION is quite wonderful. Even looking at the cover and knowing the band name gives you a rather good feeling. Luckily the music doesn't disappoint either. The sound is surprisingly good with a razor sharp production mixed with the insanity of these Brazilians. So the balance is good, the best of two worlds. A bestial onslaught of ancient death Metal with a beefy production. **SUBROSA** - Strega CD (I HATE) I like this band a lot, for many it might seem a bit too out there and carries a whole lot of different influences so it is impossible to put them in any category. Mainly the music lives in somewhat Doom/Stoner landscape with soothing female vocals, but more than a few times it wonders of to something you might find on a PJ HARVEY album for instance or somehow some more of a alternative rock style.

JEX THOTH - I CD (I HATE) I think JEX THOTH are heading for great success in their coming years, they are put in with bands like THE DEVILS BLOOD, BLOOD CEREMONY etc. Not sure but it seems to be quite hip now, and especially amusing when it comes to the great THE DEVILS BLOOD (people should really start reading lyrics....) But anyway, JEX THOTH is good too, great female vocals and just heavy, slightly psychedelic rock.....

ROOT - Zjeveni CD, Hell Symphony CD, The Temple in the Underworld CD, The Book CD (I HATE RECORDS) Four classics by Czech legends ROOT neatly re-produced on CD by I HATE RECORDS. I'm pretty impressed by the variety of the roster of I HATE RECORDS, and these re-releases are really top notch. The albums are all classics, I'm not really a big fan of the bonus tracks as they are tagged along at the end, and this way it kinda ruins the enjoyment of the album. Would have been better to put them on a separate disc but I understand the financial aspects of that. But anyway, it is great to listen to them, especially when you know they were released way back and behind the iron curtain, imaging the obstacles a Black Metal band like ROOT must have gone through. Good thing is that I think all this definitely adds something to the music, a more unique, desperate flavour. The obvious influences like BATHORY is there but there certainly is something else. For me it is the 3 first albums that are absolutely amazing, there is a slight musical change between those albums but not such a big deal..... "The Book" is their fifth album and you can hear they have gone in a more epic, dramatic vein here, which is also very interesting. I just like their earlier albums better. It is like BATHORY after "Blood Fire Death", not really bad but nothing compared to the early stuff.

HELLISH CROSSFIRE - Bloodrust Scythe CD (I HATE RECORDS) 2nd album by HELLISH CROSSFIRE and it kinda follows in the tradition of their debut "The Burning Pentagram", which means it is great German Thrash. Or, great might not be the right word but definitely better than boring and slightly above average. It is nice listening to this once in a while.

LASERGUYS - Ho' Ho' Ho LP Norwegian grind band that made a x-mas album. I think I said enough already..... Its just too bizarre not to be liked.... I am baffled and will for sure not play this album much, still, this intrigues me because of the insanity behind it. Mentally challenged people are people too

BESTIAL HOLOCAUST - Temple Of Damnation CD (I HATE RECORDS) MADNESS) I like the bestial attack of this horde, but... as on the chaotic but well executed realms of South American extreme Metal... on the level of bands like VULCANO, PENTAGRAM or SARCOPHAGO... certainly enjoyable.

TERRORAMA - Omnipotence CD (NUCLEAR WAR NOW!) I think it is the brains behind I HATE RECORDS doing a great job on their label, there is a band related to the label too - TERRORAMA! So, this is more on the extreme side of things lending a great deal to the South American classic scene as well as NIFELHEIM for instance. Fairly savage and an album I definitely recommend.

ARES KINGDOM - Incendiary CD/LP (NUCLEAR WAR NOW!) 1995 release, nice to hear skilled musicians perform this brutal Thrash attack.... They have an extra edge to them. It is always kinda hard to say why band A is better than band B), but they are certainly above many others. As said, skilled musicians, good songs and powerful performance

SIXX - Sister Devil CD/2 LP (NUCLEAR WAR NOW!) I like it, but I feel people just get into this for the VON connection and not really the music. I admit I fell into that trap as well. It's OK old school Goth without Metal influences (which is good as Metal Goth is the saddest thing ever), this is just a demo so the sound is...well....'demo'. Very bass driven music similar to many others of the old Goth scene....(BAUHAUS, THE CURE or whatever) The spoken interludes are kinda meh... but not quite as bad as on the MESSIAH LP for instance, not comparing them just saying....

NOCTURNAL GRAVES/HELL SPIRIT - The Grave spirit Sessions split LP/CD (NUCLEAR WAR NOW!) Great to have some new NOCTURNAL GRAVES material, this time they teamed up with Finns HELL SPIRIT for a split LP NOCTURNAL GRAVES are great, insane ripping Thrash (think early SODOM and yes, I do think early SODOM all the time...) but even more intense and intense..... HELL SPIRIT is good too and slightly similar.... But for me, NOCTURNAL GRAVES are the masters of this split LP (And I saw HELL SPIRIT is a nice bonus)

KYRCK PRODUCTIONS - (label report) **THORNS** - Stigma Diabolicum CD, **STRID** - Strid CD, **ULVER** - Vargnatt CD, **VED BUENS ENDE** - Those Who Caress The Pale CD, **LIMBONIC ART** - 1995-1996, **FESTER** - The Commitments That Shattered 1991-1992 CD **INFLABITAN** - Wanderer Of Grief 1993-1995 CD KYRCK PRODUCTIONS have been presenting quite a few interesting releases from the Norwegian underground, most are known to most people but nice to have stuff like this gathered on CD and vinyl for historic purposes. My faves would be the THORNS "Stigma Diabolicum" CD which contains all their classic demo stuff as well some not so very needed live stuff. That is my only beef with these releases, the live stuff is not as essential as the demo stuff. The resurrected STRID is great of course. Both bands are extremely good evidence of what once was unique in the Norwegian underground. Bringing forth true, desolate emotions with their music without sounding stupid, the STRID disc also contains material from the pre STRID band but for me it is the material on the "7" that is really unique. Of course ULVER is well known as the demo "Vargnatt" was what me sign ULVER to HEAD NOT FOUND back in the day. The demo is like a slightly more primitive version than what was presented on the "Bergtatt" album, and the demo also contains some 'unreleased' stuff (unreleased as in not on any of the official albums) like "Ulverytterens Kamp". VED BUENS ENDE was already quite alternative in their demo days, and its interesting how they structure the songs.... I think all these bands prove that there was definitely something going on here in Norway in the early mid '90s..... LIMBONIC ART is slightly different with their more symphonic sound and hearing the early stages of this band is kinda interesting, I am not the biggest fan of the band anymore but I do like to listen to this. That is a thing that goes for all the releases by KYRCK. They are all very interesting for the historic references. .. FESTER is more typical Death/Thrash with Black Metal hints. Again, never really a big fan of their albums but its nice to hear the demos in their somewhat 'charming' simplicity. INFLABITAN is for me a brand new experience, I thought I was well aware of the early Norse bands but I have no recollection of this band....After some detective work I found out this is the one man project and most interesting is that there is a link to the masters STRID here so....But anyway, new material to me recorded in ca. 1993-1994, not quite as trippy as VED BUENS ENDE but definitely slightly progressive in the Black Metal world, or experimental if that is a better word. The material planned for a split "so back in the day is the most interesting hear, and a rater shame that this lot never made a proper album - could have been interesting....But the best ones here are THORNS and STRID but every release is interesting for various reasons.



DEATHRASH - Thrash Beyond Death CD (DEATHRASH.NET) Its with mixed feelings I review this CD which have both old and new material presented. I'm a really big fan of the DEATHRASH demo "Faces Of Death" from '86, their Thrash sound was like a mix of the East Coast and West Coast so certainly more enjoyable than the somewhat wimpy West Coast sound.....The sound owes a lot to EXODUS (when EXODUS was good that s...) tangled with a more rawer songwriting. So for me, the point of getting this CD lies within those 3 tracks. The new material is OK too I suppose but being the bitter old bastard that I am it is the 3 demo tracks that gets repeated play..... Its not that it is bad, it just seems like I don't care enough to get too into it. And then there are some recent live tracks too, so you got good value for your money.....Their best song ever is "Buried Alive" which should be a classic.

VOMITOR - Devil's Poison LP/CD (BLACK ACE RECORDS/KNEEL BEYOND THE MASTERS THRONE) Finally, well, at least I think its been quite a while since the outstanding "Bleeding The Priest" album so here is the logical, ugly follow up..... I like the way how the production is so fucked and for the average ear it doesn't make sense. Luckily that is not the case with me, I did spend a lot of time with "Obsessed By Cruelty" already so I know the drill.

DØDSENGEL - Mirium Occultum 2 LP (TERRATUR POSSESSIONS) Not to be mistaken by the band mentioned in the demo section. This is a new band for me even if this is the 2nd LP. I didn't know what to expect but I was really taken by the presentation of this release, the artwork is stellar, creates an feeling uneasiness and disorder. Music is what matters tho', divided on four sides of black wax you get simplistic Black Metal more bases on feeling than riffs... It is mellow and even if I said simple it is not ineffective.....It is far from other Norwegian Black Metal bands I heard lately, it is rather unique and interesting.

SARATH - Siste Indre CD (TERRATUR POSSESSIONS) Maybe it is easy to compare SARATH to the earlier mentioned as they have quite a few thing in common; quality being one. I don't know if 'normal' is the right word in this sense but SARATH has a more Metal feel with their depressive, melancholic Black Metal art. This is only a 4 track CD but it works well as it is quite lengthy.....

GANGRENATOR - Tales of A Thousand Graves CD (APOCALYPTIC EMPIRE) Not quite LASERGUYs but pretty damn impressive anyway. Didn't actually have any expectations to this but damn, pretty good stuff. Reeking of early 'goles Death Metal brutality with a very suitable production, impressive John Tardy like vocals.....If you miss that specific style of Death Metal you could do much worse than checking this out. **RELEASE THE KRAKEN!** **RUNHILD GAMMELSETER** - Amplicon CD (UTECH RECORDS) How to review a Runhild CD...First you need to shut down all rules you know about music in the first place, this album is a journey through vocal hell. Of course it is too simple to say it sounds like a crazed out version of Diamanda Galas. But at least you will get some sort of understanding of what is going on, this is NOT music as we know it.....The first track will give you an impression of what this is all about, guttural vocals mixed with angelic voice - and everything else in between. And this is how the album progress as a complicated journey through an isolated life.



BESTIAL MOCKERY - Slaying The Life CD 2007 (SEASON OF MIST), Sepulchral Wrath CD 2009 (WITCHHAMMER PRODUCTIONS), Christcrushing Hammerchainsaw CD (HELLS HEADBANGERS) A bunch of releases from Swedish BESTIAL MOCKERY is never wrong, the latter album "Christcrushing Hammerchainsaw" is a re-release of the 2002 album and "Slaying The Life" is the more recent one. Not that there is so much difference.... As all good (Black) Metal should be this is well rooted in the tradition of VENOM with a more South American Deathrash twist to it. What I particularly like about them is the fact that they been going for ages - never progress and stay true to their filthy fucking Metal mayhem. This being said you can pretty much pick up whatever release you might find with them.....

DETRITIVORE "Pakt CD (LYDERHORN) A very interesting CD handed over in my direction..... It seems like bands like recent ULVER and SUNNO)) do have some sort of influence than upcoming bands. It is not as droned out quite as much as SUNNO)) but there are certainly the same vibe going on. A good thing with this lot is that the tracks are not overly long so they never get boring.....The production is very clear and there is always something going on.

And, if in doubt check out ANY release by DEVILS BLOOD



TO THE DEATH!

ATTILA

I HAVE A LOT OF RESPECT FOR YOU.
I THINK YOU'RE A GENIUS. ALL YOURS
DISGUISES WERE BLOODY AMAZING.
THE DICTATOR WAS GREAT, THE MUMMY WAS
PRETTY COOL. EVEN THE BUNNY WAS FUNNY FOR
A ONE SHOT... BUT COMING ONSTAGE
AS ARNE BABB,
NO-FUCKING-WAY!





AN ENDING IN FLAMES



SUCK OFF LIFE

